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ANOTHER WAVE.

BY CLARA THWAITES.

Strip of sand beside the shoreless sea,
The gray old ocean of Eternity:
Is this our life,
With its toil and strife?
And such is our day,
By the ocean gray,
On the shifting sands as we idly play.
And the waves of Time,
With a murmurous chime,
Lap the shores with an endless rhyme.
The waves are years,
With their gathered tears,
And they break on the shore
For evermore,
Till the strip of sand,
Life's glittering strand,
Is caught in the arms of the gray old sea,
The shoreless sea of Eternity.

Fettered, Yet Free.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LIKE UNTO A STAR," "BRUNA'S STORY," "A GIRL'S DESPAIR," "TWICE MARRIED," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER IV.

SHE had resumed her contemplation of the fire; Sir Hugh's heart was beating less heavily now, he was calmer. Seen thus she was not less beautiful than she looked in her sleep, but she was more lifelike, less like a statue or a spirit, more like a woman of flesh and blood.

"I must apologise for coming alone," Sir Hugh said presently. "My sisters are in London, and I am alone at the Hall."

"You spend much of your time here?" the girl asked.

"Yes! We rarely leave home."

"I do not wonder," she answered gently. "It is so beautiful here."

"You are fond of the country, I hope, Miss——"

He had begun eagerly, then stopped short, looking at her half-deprecatingly, half-enquiringly.

"My name is Lestrange," she said, and if her lips were a little paler than usual Sir Hugh did not notice their change of color. "No, I never liked the country before," she added hurriedly. "But Danecourt is beautiful."

His face brightened with swift pleasure, but before he could speak the portiere was raised; there was the rustle of a silken gown, and Mrs. Geith came into the room, followed by Knolls with tea.

During the rest of Sir Hugh's visit, which was prolonged far more than les convenances permitted, Miss Lestrange did not take much part in the conversation.

She poured out tea with little, deft white fingers, and let Sir Hugh linger beside her, while he deliberately added cream and sugar to the cup she gave him, an operation which took so much time and care that Mrs. Geith looked at him rather curiously as he performed it, and something in the smile with which he answered a slight remark of Cecil's about tea being no squire's beverage, brought the color to the face of the older woman, and a sudden fear sprang up in her dark eyes,—a fear which deepened when Sir Hugh rose, with evident reluctance, to go.

"Will you be very charitable, and let me come again soon Mrs. Geith?" he asked, with a humility which was half real, half feigned. "I am all alone at Danecourt, and I have always had an intense horror of solitude."

"I wonder," Cecil Lestrange said suddenly, looking over at him with lustrous, shining eyes, "if you know what solitude is, Sir Hugh."

"Most certainly I do," he answered, smiling as he looked down at her from his tall height as she leaned back in her low chair. "The rooms at the Hall are like deserts or howling wildernesses. Will you not be merciful and accede to my prayer, Mrs. Geith?"

"We shall be glad to see you," she said, a little coldly, perhaps already foreseeing the misery which constant intercourse between the Hall and the Gate House would cause, yet powerless to avoid it.

Sir Hugh thanked her warmly, then, relinquishing her hand, he crossed to Cecil's side, holding out his own. The girl rose and put her fingers into his outstretched palm. As she did so he started and looked at her anxiously: in that warm, scented room, on that balmy spring day, her hand was cold as marble or ice.

"You are ill!" he exclaimed anxiously. "I have tired you. Mrs. Geith, why did you not tell me that my selfish thoughtlessness would tire her?"

He had turned to Mrs. Geith in evident anxiety and distress, but he still held the little child fingers in his strong warm hand.

"I am not ill, and you have not tired me," Miss Lestrange said smiling, the loveliest little touch of crimson coming into her fair face. "My hands are always cold. Come, Laura,"—she quietly disengaged her hand from his—"let us see Sir Hugh safely off the premises, shall we? I have had no fresh air to day."

They went with him into the hall—a fair, white-clad woman and a fair black-clad woman, side by side, and Sir Hugh's tall, grey figure at Cecil's side; then they went on out of the semi-twilight of the hall into the bright May sunshine without. There they stood for a few minutes on the terrace, and Mrs. Geith moved away to speak to one of the gardeners who was at work close by.

Seen by the fuller light, Cecil Lestrange's beauty suffered no depreciation, and Sir Hugh's eager, longing eyes rested with passionate admiration on the lovely face—the lily fairness of skin heightened by the contrast of the jet-black lashes and delicately-arched brows, the crimson rose making a spot of rich color against the white of her gown.

"You have not endorsed your sister's kind permission," he said in a low tone. "May I come again soon?"

Cecil's grey eyes wandered over the green lawns and spring flowers; the color rushed in a hot wave to her cheeks, even to her brow.

"My sister is mistress here," she said; "my permission is not needed."

"Ah, do not say so," he pleaded, his voice stirred by an unwonted passion, his blue eyes aglow, his face lit up with an eagerness at which two hours ago he would have laughed. "Will you not tell me that you will be glad to see me, or at least, that my visits will not be distasteful to you?"

"Why should they be?" she queried, with a little laugh, the color fading rapidly from her face leaving her white as the soft folds of her white gown. "In the country one is forced to be neighborly, especially with one's landlord."

Sir Hugh's face clouded perceptibly, a flash of passionate pain issued from the blue eyes which a moment before had been so bright and smiling.

"Perhaps I deserved that," he said in a low voice; "I was presumptuous to dare to suppose that you would care. Forgive me."

"For what?" she said carelessly. "Between such utter strangers as——"

"We are not strangers," he interrupted moodily; "at least, I could not look upon you as a stranger, and——"

"Acquaintance then," the girl interpolated in her pretty, careless voice. "We can scarcely be more, surely, Sir Hugh?"

"Now, perhaps, but," he began eagerly, then turned from her with a troubled look in his eyes, an unusual pallor on his bronzed cheek.

What madness it was, he thought to himself, to think that she should care whether she ever saw him again or not. He had been insane enough to let himself love her at first sight; but she must be used to such insanity in the men who saw her! What a fool he was making of himself, he pondered bitterly, yet feeling, even as he tried to shake off the thought, that life without this woman, who two hours before had for him no existance, would be but weariness, and yearning, and pain. This beautiful, pale woman, who stood there so fair, and calm, and indifferent, with the sunshine on her yellow hair.

Mrs. Geith came back, her long black, satin dress trailing over the soft greensward, the diamonds on her hands catching every ray of light.

As her voice, making some trivial remark about the flowers, struck upon his ear, Sir Hugh started, pulled himself together as it were, and, turning to her, repeated his adieux.

Cecil stood motionless, toying with one of the roses which had become loose from the cluster in her dress; Sir Hugh was turning away with a grave bow when her sudden movement arrested him.

"Come again soon! she said gaily, holding out her hand to him, and between the slim, white, ringless figure was the rose she had been trifling with. "Do you care to have it?" she added half shyly. "It is very sweet!"

"Do I care?" he repeated under his breath, and the cloud dispersed as if by magic from his face as his blue eyes met hers.

"Then give me your narcissus in exchange," she said lightly. "I have been coveting it ever since you came."

And Sir Hugh, turning as a bend in the path shut him out from view, saw her fasten the narcissus among the roses at her breast.

"Cecil!"

Mrs. Geith's voice, grave and troubled, broke the silence which had reigned on the terrace for some minutes after Sir Hugh's departure; her sister, who was looking dreamily at the fair sunshiny landscape, started slightly as she turned to her.

"What is it?"

"Why did you do that, dear? It was not prudent!"

"Was not it? He looked so unhappy, and—and—I could not help it, Laura!"

"Cecil, I am sorry we came here," Mrs. Geith said unsteadily.

"Why? I think we shall be very happy here."

"Happy!" echoed Laura in a faint, incredulous tone.

"Yes; happy. Why not? All those things which you said made life bright are ours. We are young, and rich, and—and free!"

Her voice faltered, her face changed as she uttered the last word; her lips grew white with some painful thought; the lustrous grey eyes dilated and grew dark and troubled.

"Why do you speak as if there could be no happiness for us, Laura?" she said presently. "So short a time ago you preached so different a creed; wealth was all powerful, you said."

"So short a time ago," Laura Geith said nervously; "but so much has happened!"

Cecil's wide, grey eyes closed; the little hand was pressed suddenly to her heart, crushing the roses which nestled there.

"Nothing has happened!" she said hurriedly, in a faint, breathless tone. "Have you already forgotten, Laura? Nothing has happened. This past year, this most dreadful year, is blotted out as if it had never existed. Let us forget it! Let it be as if it had never been! It is over. Don't look back, Laura; look forward; look around you, look anywhere, but not back, not back! For Heaven's sake, do not look back!"

CHAPTER V.

"Cecil, are you ready?"

No answered came from behind the closed door; there was no sound from within the room. Mrs. Geith, standing on the landing without, finished drawing on her long black gloves before she repeated her summons.

"Cecil, are you ready? It is time to go. Cecil! Cecil!" she repeated, with a touch of impatience as she repeated her knock at the door; but still the silence reigned, and no answer came.

"Perhaps she has gone down," Mrs. Geith said half aloud, as she tried the door; the handle turned in her hand, the door yielded to her touch; it was not locked; Mrs. Geith entered.

The room, which was large and lofty and furnished in shining light woods and delicately hued chints, was in some disorder, that usually attendant on the important operation of dressing for dinner; but it was not its disorder which elicited a little cry of surprise from Mrs. Geith; it was the sight of her sister's dinner-dress thrown carelessly over a couch, and of the girl herself sitting in the low, broad window-seat clad in a loose cambric dressing gown. The casement window was open, and the soft, pure air came in, bringing with it a perfume of honeysuckle which mingled with the fragrance of a great bunch of June roses on the toilet-table.

Mrs. Geith advanced into the room, the surprise on her face changing to annoyance. Cecil remained motionless in the window seat, not turning her head, or giving any sign that she was aware of her sister's entrance.

"Not dressed yet!" Mrs. Geith exclaimed hurriedly in a vexed tone. "Why, Cecil what are you thinking of?—it is more than time to start! And what could Adele have been thinking of?" she added almost angrily; "she told me you were ready."

"She told you the truth," Cecil said in a strange, dull, tuneless voice; "I was quite ready."

"Ready!" Mrs. Geith repeated, looking at the dainty Indian silk gown upon the sofa, with its profusion of creamy lace and embroidery, and from it to Miss Lestrange's dressing gown.

"Yes. I dressed, Laura; but I undressed again. You must go to the Hall alone; I am not going."

She spoke in the same muffled, tuneless voice, in the same apathetic manner; but she rose from the window seat and came towards her sister as she spoke. The latter looked at her in a startled manner, and saw that she was deathly pale, and that her face was drawn and haggard, and that it bore a strange look of repressed suffering.

"Why are you not going?" Mrs. Geith said. "Are you ill?"

"Ill! Oh, no; I am not ill," the girl answered wearily, in a tone which said that she was ill in mind if not in body.

"Then what caprice is actuating such strange behavior?" Mrs. Geith asked coldly, standing very stately and graceful in the long black gown, with its profusion of jet, which she considered sufficient mourning now.

Cecil put up her little hands to her for

head and pushed back the clustering fair hair.

"When I said I was not ill," she said, still in the same listless, indifferent manner, "I was wrong. I am ill,—my head aches terribly. I cannot go with you to the Hall to-night."

"Is not this rather a sudden decision?" Mrs. Geith asked. "What excuse am I to give to Miss Danecourt?"

"Will not a bad headache be sufficient excuse?" the girl said faintly. "It has always been another name for heartache, has not it?"

"And what excuse am I to make to Sir Hugh?" queried Mrs. Geith quietly. "He will hardly believe in a headache which shows itself so suddenly. You said nothing about a headache this afternoon when he was here, and your singing, and——"

"Tell him my exertions this afternoon brought it on," Cecil interrupted her with a sudden little bitter laugh. "I sang too much, or drank too much tea, which reacted on my nerves! It is no caprice," she added heavily, turning away from her sister and fumbling with the lace at the throat of her loose wrapper as if even it oppressed her. "I cannot go Laura. I tried, I did my best. I dressed, but I undressed again, because I knew I could not sit out dinner without fainting or screaming out, or something of the kind, and making a scene."

There was a chair before the dressing-table; and as she spoke she sank into it, and resting her elbow on the table leaned her head upon it. The beautiful, sorrowful face was reflected in the mirror opposite her; the great sombre eyes, dark with sorrow and pain, looked steadily at their reflection, and as they looked saw how the pain deepened in their lustrous depths until it became anguished.

There was a minute's silence; Mrs. Geith stood trifling rather nervously with her great black fan. She was unaccustomed to such a mood in Cecil now; the two months they had been at the Gate House had seemed to give her back her bright girlishness and animation, but the face which she saw reflected in the mirror was not a girl's face,—young, beautiful, and care free,—it was a face of a woman, haggard, and weary and miserable.

And yet two short hours ago it had been bright with smiles and the lovely blushes which Sir Hugh's words and glances had brought there, and her rich voice had filled the drawing room with melody as she sang his favorite songs. And every day, as spring deepened into summer, Mrs. Geith had seen how her sister brightened, and how her loveliness bloomed afresh in the fresh, sweet Daleshire air, and her own forebodings had faded gradually, and she had grown to look at the future hopefully, and to forget the past.

"Cecil!" she exclaimed almost impatiently, "Cecil, I cannot understand you."

"I cannot understand myself," the girl said, turning to her with a sudden flash of passionate pain in her beautiful, tragic eyes. "I have been brave and confident until now, and now, just when success has crowned me, I hesitate and draw back; now when happiness, such happiness as I have never dreamed of, at least such as I have never dared to hope for, is within my reach I cannot, I dare not put out my hand to grasp it!"

"And yet you determined!" the elder woman said slowly, but the other interrupted her with a passionate gesture full of pain and despair.

"I determined to blot out the past?" she exclaimed. "Yes, and I will do so yet. It shall not come between me and my happiness, between him and his happiness!" Her voice softened suddenly as she uttered the last four words. "It shall not! Of that I am more resolved than ever. Yet, sometimes, as now, I—I am afraid."

Her lips grew very white as she spoke, a great gasping sigh came from them, she trembled in every limb.

Her sister looked at her with a great compassion, a great tenderness in her dark eyes.

"Cecil," she said gently, "give it up; let us go away. There is nothing to keep us here, and we can go so easily. You know I never approved of it as soon as I saw how things were drifting, and there is yet time. Give it up, dear, and let us go away."

The girl looked at her for a moment with a strangely wistful, questioning look in her eyes, then shook her head slightly, with a smile which was sadder than the most bitter tears could have been.

"Go away!" she repeated bitterly. "Ah, Laura, if we could! But if you were to take me away, dear, patient, long-suffering sister," she went on with gentler intonation, "my soul would come back here to him! Ah, you do not know, you do not know," she cried out passionately, "how I have grown to love him! with what a terrible all-overpowering love; all the greater, I know and feel, because of this barrier between us,—this barrier which I know, yet which he shall never know."

"But Cecil, will it be possible to keep it from him?" the elder woman said unsteadily. "I do not speak now of what is right, because there is no need. We both know and feel how wrong, how more than wrong ——"

"The sin will be on my head," Cecil said hurriedly, silencing her sister with a little imperative gesture of the hand, "not on yours, Laura—if there be sin," she added, pushing back her hair with the same nervous gesture, "and that I doubt. Why should I suffer always—always? Why should I never know any happiness? And I am so young, and I may have to live out a long, long life! Oh, Laura, I would have been better, a thousand times better if you had let me die when I was so ill, if all my life is to be darkened and miserable!"

"Cecil, Cecil!" urged Mrs. Geith gently, alarmed at the unusual agitation which shook the girl's slender figure in every limb; and at the pleading voice Cecil paused, looked around in a strange, startled manner, and sank heavily into her chair, again putting her hands up to her trembling mouth with a nervous movement pitiful to see.

There was a little silence, a silence like the calm which follows a storm. Cecil was the first to break it, as she rose and put her hand gently on her sister's shoulder.

"Go now, dear," she said; "you will be very late if you linger. Tell Anna how sorry I am not to be able to come, and give her my love. And—and you need not be anxious about me, Laura," she added, forcing a smile to the stiff, pale lips. "I will lie down and get rid of this troublesome headache which makes me so nervous and foolish, and by the time you come back I shall be myself again. Good-bye." She bent and touched her sister's cheek with her cold lips. "Don't flirt with Doctor Baxter! If you do him any more damage, Laura, his patients will suffer."

Mrs. Geith smiled as she returned the caress, but as soon as the door had closed after her, the smiles faded and her face was very grave and pre-occupied and troubled as she got into the brougham and drove away to the Hall, where she and Cecil were expected to dinner.

"Fortunately it is not a dinner party," she said to herself, as the carriage turned into the drive leading to the Hall. "It would have caused so much confusion and comments; but as it is only ourselves, and the vicar, and Doctor Baxter, it does not matter so much. Sir Hugh will be disappointed. Poor Sir Hugh! Ah, if he had not fallen in love with Cecil, we might have been so happy here! And yet he has never told her so, and it may be only a flirtation after all!"

And yet, as she recalled the long spring days and the hours of early summer, when Sir Hugh had lingered by her sister's side, and when his blue eyes had followed her with such intense love and his voice—the deep, musical voice, so pleasant to hear,—had softened always into tenderness as he spoke to Cecil, she felt that it was no passing fancy he felt for her beautiful, unhappy sister, but a love which Cecil's own conduct seemed to increase by its alternate sweet graciousness and capricious coldness, and by that sudden lovelight which she could not keep out of her eyes when they met his.

"If he only knew,—if he only knew!" Laura Geith murmured to herself, as she drove up the stately avenue. "Ah, poor Cecil!"

They had been two months at Danecourt now, and a friendship, which was already intimacy, had grown up between the two houses—the grand old Hall, in its beechen woods, and the charming old Tudor house, with its terraces and velvety green lawns.

Sir Hugh's sister, stately, blue-eyed Anne Miss Danecourt, or the Mistress, as the household called her, and pretty golden haired Jessie, ten years her sister's junoir, had been equally attracted and charmed by the grace and beauty and distinction of the tenants of the Gate House, and had shown them much kindness and hospitality, which had been frankly met and cordially reciprocated.

And as they knew each other better, Anne Danecourt, already attracted to Cecil by her fragile beauty and delicate health—had grown even more interested in her, as she marked the charm of manner which, independent of her beauty, would alone have sufficed to make Cecil irresistible. The girl puzzled, charmed and fascinated; her fitful moods, now so winning and gracious, at other times—to Sir Hugh, at least—repellant and cold, were even in their coldness so graceful, that while they vexed they charmed.

Altogether, the ladies at the Hall, with one exception, had declared the tenants of the Gate House an acquisition to the very limited society at Danecourt; while the men of the neighborhood unanimously voted them charming.

Altogether, as Mrs. Geith thought with a little vexed sigh, life might have been very pleasant at Danecourt but for——

The carriage pulled up at the great stone steps leading to the hall door, and Sir Hugh, looking very handsome and happy in his evening dress, was standing there waiting to receive his guests.

No wonder Cecil loved him, her sister thought, as her eyes, resting upon him, noted not only his personal beauty, but the nobility, and truth, and fervor, which made his face so pleasant to look upon—the fair, frank, smiling face, which darkened suddenly and perceptibly, as his eager eyes saw that there was only one lady in the pretty little softly cushioned brougham, and that that lady was not the one he was longing to see.

"You are alone?" the young man said in a low voice as he assisted Mrs. Geith from her carriage, and they went up the broad stone steps into the stately old hall, with its fretted roof and richly carved oak panelling and chimney-piece, and the pure sunshine streaming through its stained windows with all the radiance of a dying summer day.

"I am alone, unfortunately," Mrs. Geith answered gravely. "Cecil was not well enough to come with me."

"Not well enough?" Sir Hugh repeated, turning pale, as mechanically he helped Mrs. Geith to remove her soft light shawl, which a lady's-maid came forward to receive.

"No; I am afraid she did too much this afternoon," Mrs. Geith replied quietly. "She is far from strong yet, although Daleshire has done wonders for her. She is not careful of herself."

"It was my fault," the young man said ruefully, as they crossed the hall, two dark and stately figures in the light of the setting sun. "I made her sing. It was thoughtless and selfish of me, but I am punished now," he added in a lower tone, as a servant opened a door on the left and ushered them into a small pretty white and gold drawing-room, into which Sir Hugh followed his visitor, with a very moody expression, and carefully avoiding to tread on her long black train, which spread itself fan-shape over the carpet behind her.

CHAPTER VI.

THE radiance of the sun, which was slowly going to its rest behind the purple hills, and which had poured its rich light into the old hall at Danecourt, touched, too, more softly and tenderly, compassionately almost, the window at which Cecil Lestrange sat leaning her beautiful, tired head against the heavy oaken frame, and letting her sad eyes wander over the beautiful landscape spreading far and wide before, yet feeling and seeing none of its beauty in the passionate unrest which held her.

The soft, evening air—softer and balmier than it often is in June in this clime of ours—was moving gently among the full-leaved trees, heavy with the sweetness of the flowers which were all in blossom in the sweet old-fashioned garden.

The lilac trees gleamed in the fading light, the golden tassels of the laburnum hung among their green leaves, the tall, pale lilies drooped their graceful heads, the evening of the fair June day was even more beautiful than the day itself had been.

It was very still, so still that the Gate House might have been miles away from any other habitation, yet there was nothing forlorn or desolate in the stillness; nothing but beauty and sweetness in the golden glory of the sun setting yonder behind the purple hills, dying the western sky all manner of rich hues of gold, and orange, and crimson, and russet, and purple.

But to the girl crouching in the low-cushioned window-seat, the fair, summer evening, the lovely death—the beautiful, lingering death—of the lovely day brought no peace. The anguish which had crept into her lovely miserable eyes before her sister left her had deepened until it had become despair. Her face was almost gray in its ashen pallor.

Hugh Danecourt himself would hardly have known it as the face of the girl who had sung to him in the sunshiny drawing-room that afternoon; who had brought him a cup of tea in her pretty white fingers; who had blushed so divinely at his whispered softly-spoken thanks; who had seemed the incarnation of bright and gracious womanhood. Cecil, herself, wondered dimly if she could be that girl.

The last two months had been very happy ones, aye, happy, notwithstanding that secret which she carried about with her unceasingly—that fear of discovery which had almost died away in the apparent security of the present.

All that they had hoped to find at Danecourt they had found there—all and more; far, far more. Renewed health had given Cecil renewed courage and hope, and as the days went by, and they learnt more of their surroundings, that fear of discovery, which at first had been terrible, had faded.

The beauty of the fair, sweet land, which was new and beautiful to both women, had impressed them and delighted all their artistic cravings—the charming old picturesque house, which made so comfortable a home; the few friends, few, yet every one with an individuality of his or her own, thus making their society delightful; the cheerful, simple hospitality; the dinners at Danecourt Hall, which would have pleased even the most prejudiced against that most prevalent form of English hospitality; the afternoon teas at the Gate House, which Cecil's own sweet grace made charming to her guests; and musical evenings in the old drawing-room where Sir Hugh had seen her first, when both Mrs. Geith and her sister proved how music could be taught at a cheap Belgian school; and the pleasant loitering in the grounds afterwards, ere the little party broke up and the guests made their way homeward, oftenest walking home through the fair, still night.

Ah, how pleasant it had been, and now, and now it must end.

Some words, just a few tender, softly-spoken words, emphasized by a look from the blue eyes, which had made the world look so fair a place to Cecil Lestrange for the last six weeks, and awakened the girl from this pleasant security; words which had made her heart throb joyfully and wildly as it had never beaten before, and then sink like lead; words which had forced her to tear off the dainty garments into which her sister's maid had endued her, and refuse to go to the Hall; words which had given her the fiercest joy, the most heartfelt pain her twenty-two years of life had known.

She was thinking of them as she sat in the window-seat looking out at the golden and purple sunset, with sorrowful, unseeing eyes, for which all the beauty of the dying day was wasted, and her heart was throbbing with the old fierce pain and joy, which for awhile had died out, and she seemed to hear again the tender pleading "my darling," which had involuntarily escaped his lips, yet which had so evidently come from his heart.

"Must I give him up?" she said suddenly, rising from her seat, and throwing up her arms with a gesture of mingled longing and misery. "Must I give him up? My darling, my darling! Must I give you up? We could be so happy together! I would be so true and patient and loving that you should never regret it! Never! Must I give up this one glad, good thing which my life has ever known, and live on in darkness and misery for the rest of my life? It will be a long life only too surely. Only the happy die, and if I had not been very strong I could not have lived through——ah, great heavens, how did I live through it, strong as I am?"

She began pacing up and down the pretty room, in which the sunset's dying glow lingered, touching the shining light woods, the dainty chintzes, the Bohemian glass on the dressing-table, and all the dainty artistic trifles which girls delight to surround themselves with, and the pretty silken gown lying disregarded on the couch; then after awhile, her strength failing her, she sank exhausted on the sofa, crushing heedlessly all the fragile laces and embroideries of the gown which she should have been wearing at Danecourt Hall. Then, after a little pause, she broke out again.

"Can I give him up?" she moaned. "Can I give him up? Have I strength to put away from me all chance of happiness? Have I courage to make him suffer as he must suffer if ever he knows?"

A sob broke from her white lips; she pushed back the soft, clustering hair from her face with rough fingers, heedless what pain they gave.

"If he ever knows," she went on in a moment. "Why need he ever know? Why not conceal it from him always, until the end? There is no one here to betray me. So few people exist in all the wide, wide world who could identify Cecil Lestrange with——"

She checked herself, looking round with

a startled glance, as if even in her solitude she feared the words might be overheard. Some of the passion seemed to be dying away; her movements as she paced the room were already growing more languid. She raised her hands to her head and pressed them there with a pathetic gesture of suffering, and a pitiful expression crept into her eyes.

"So few people know," she thought piteously, "so few in all this wide, wide world, that there is no fear that he should ever know. He loves his home so well, and I would make him so happy there, that we need never wander from this most sweet spot. Oh! I cannot—I cannot give him up!"

Once more she left the sofa and went to the window; but this time she fell on her knees before the window seat, and throwing her arms out upon it, lifted her miserable, aching eyes to the glories of the dying day.

"Oh! help me," she prayed half aloud, "dear, kind Heaven! Help me; give me strength! And yet be pitiful—be pitiful! Remember all I have suffered, and how sorely I was puished for my sin! Must I tell him all the truth?" she continued breathlessly; must I see his face change and grow cold, and the love die out of his eyes as they meet mine? Perhaps, if he had known at first, he might have been pitiful; but now—now—could he ever forgive? And his own life would be darkened and clouded through me!—me—who would die to save him a pang. But,"—the beautiful head sank forward on the out-stretched arms, as if bowed by the weight of her terrible humiliation,—"if afterwards, when we were bound to each other by bonds which only death could break, he discovered that which I would die rather than he should know, how would he not despise and hate me. He loves me now, but whose love could stand such a test as that? No man's love could,—but a woman's might!"

Something in that last thought gave her a little more courage; she lifted her head and looked once more at the crimson and golden glory over the distant hills.

"A man's would not," she thought, "but a woman's love might,—a woman's love would! If his life held a secret as shameful as mine,—even more shameful, if that could be; if it held a sin as deep, aye and deeper, I could overlook it easily, so easily, and love him all the more fondly and truly for his need of me. And perhaps his love is great enough to——"

She broke off abruptly, a short, bitter, broken laugh escaped her lips.

"Ah, no, no, no!" she said aloud. "He could not tarnish his honorable name and blur the stainless honor of his family! Even if he forgave me, if he loved and pitied me, he, if he knew, would give me up! He would give me up! Whatever comes,"—she rose to her feet with a sudden strength born of her desperate purpose,—"he shall not know. Even if I find strength to send him away, he shall think it is because I do not love him. He shall not in the future, which seemed to be going to separate us, think of me with contempt. We will go away, Laura and I; it will only be one wrench, and perhaps Heaven will be merciful and let me die?"

The crimson and gold were dying out of the western sky as she turned away from the window, pale and exhausted but more calm. The sweet scent-laden air had grown fresher with the advent of night. Someone was knocking at the door of her room; Cecil rose languidly, and opened it to admit her sister's French maid.

"I have knocked more than once," she explained. "I feared mademoiselle was ill."

"I am not ill now," Cecil answered coldly. "But I want to be alone. Just give me a teagown, Adele, and I will go downstairs, the fresh air will do my head good."

"Dinner has been prepared for mademoiselle."

"I will have some tea," Cecil said quietly. "Be quick, Adele," she added with a touch of nervous impatience, as the maid lingered at the wardrobe choosing the tea-gown. "Anything cool will do."

"It is not very warm to night," Adele remonstrated. "Mademoiselle will feel cold if she is going out; perhaps mademoiselle had better wear this?"

"Yes, that will do."

It was a tea-gown of some soft, woollen material, with a satin stripe which gleamed brightly from the duller background. It was white, Cecil always wore white, and fastened loosely at the waist by a soft, white satin ribbon.

"Mademoiselle looks so beautiful that it is a pity there is no one to see her," Adele said, as she tied the satin ribbon round the girl's slim waist. "Very beautiful, although a bit pale."

Cecil smiled faintly as she turned away, then moved by a sudden impulse, she went back to the table and took up one of the roses from the cluster on the dressing table, a fragrant Marechal Niel in all its beauty, and fastened it in the laces at her breast, then turned again and went slowly downstairs.

The house was very quiet as she swept her long white draperies over the polished oaken stairs, there was not a sound in the hall; which was full of the scent of roses; the hall door was open and although the lamps were lighted, they were turned down low, so that a soft, half light reigned as Cecil came gliding across the polished floor, ghostlike in her long, white, unrustling garments, and pushing aside the portiere entered the drawing room.

Here, too; all was dim, and silent, and fragrant. Tea was placed on a small table near the hearth; a lighted lamp illumined just that portion of the room in its immediate neighborhood, and made the distant corners yet more shadowy. The windows opening on to the terrace ajar; the soft evening breeze was moving the Indian curtains to and fro.

Cecil went over to the little table, and pouring out some tea, drank it thirstily. Her mouth and throat seemed dry and parched, her temples throbbed, her head ached and burned, her eyes were wide and dry, untouched by the relief of tears. She felt reckless and miserable, rebellious against her life, almost angry with herself for the passionate grief which had left her weak and weary, and as yet undecided in all save in that one thing, that Sir Hugh "should never know!"

Through the open windows the soft, cool air came in, tempting Cecil out into the quiet, scented, peaceful June night. Slowly and languidly she crossed the room and passed out on to the terrace, then stood still, with a faint, little gasping sigh. A tall, dark figure was leaning against the balustrade, still and motionless, but at sight of Cecil he stood upright and came forward to meet her.

CHAPTER VII.

"YOU!" Cecil said in a very low voice, as she drew back a step or two towards the window startled and tremulous.

"Yes; it is I," Sir Hugh's deep, musical voice said a little coldly. "I did not startle you, I hope?"

"No," she rejoined, recovering herself in a moment. "Although I am bound to say I did not expect to see you here, when you had guests at the Hall."

"I left my guests very well employed," he replied coldly, and by the soft evening light she saw that his face was proud, and cold, and set. "I came to enquire after the guest I should have had, and who disappointed me."

"For me?" Cecil raised her pretty dark eye-brows. "How good of you."

He looked at her quickly; the little ironical tone in her voice had touched him strangely.

"Your sister told me that you were ill," he said hurriedly; "that you had a headache; but you look well."

"Do I?" she answered carelessly. "A headache is a very convenient excuse, is it not?"

"Was it a true one in this case?" he queried abruptly. "I am inclined to doubt it."

"Follow your inclinations by all means," she said lightly. "Had you not better return to the guests who came at your call?"

"Not yet," he said in a tone of repressed pain and anger. "I must speak to you."

"Must?" she repeated, drawing up her straight, dark brows.

"Yes; I must speak to you," he said firmly.

Cecil hesitated. Behind the far-awaw hills the glory faded, the last, faint roseate flush died out of the sky; night had come. It was coming also—that which she dreaded yet longed to hear, and she dared not trust herself to hear it calmly, unless she treated it with disdain.

He was angry, or, at any rate, wounded, Cecil knew from his voice—the voice which hitherto had been only tender when it addressed her—was cold and constrained, almost harsh.

Well, so best; it would be easier to send him away, and she must send him away. Her heart was throbbing to suffocation as she moved away from him, and sat upon a wicker chair which stood upon the terrace.

Sir Hugh followed slowly and leaned against the stone balustrade, silent for a brief space, yet with his heart throbbing as fast, as heavily as her own.

He was the first to speak. Cecil was lying back in her chair, toying with the satin ribbon at her waist, her face turned towards him with an air of polite attention which irritated and angered him.

"You had no headache this afternoon," he said, speaking almost roughly in his pain. "It must have come on suddenly."

The girl laughed slightly.

"Oh, headaches are convenient maladies," she said lightly. "They come suddenly."

"At will, perhaps?"

"Well," she replied musingly; "perhaps. And go at will also."

"Yours is gone then?"

"Thank you, yes."

"It came conveniently to prevent you fulfilling your engagement," he said with a sneer.

"I dare say; it served my purpose," she replied indifferently.

"What was your purpose?" he asked, looking at her with eyes in which anger and pain and tenderness were all closely blended.

"I was wrong when I said it served my purpose," Cecil said slowly, not looking at him, and still restlessly twisting the ribbon at her waist with fingers which trembled a little. "I hoped it would get me a quiet evening, and you see it has not."

She had spoken very quietly, but with a significance which Sir Hugh understood only too well. He grew very pale, and a gleam of passion flashed in his bright blue eyes.

"You make me feel that I have trespassed on your hospitality too much for one day," he said haughtily; "I will not forget the lesson."

"Pardon me," the girl answered calmly, "you could not trespass on my hospitality, since I can offer you none. This house is Laura's, and her friends are always welcome."

"How you say that!" he exclaimed bitterly. "Then it is as her friend you have welcomed me?"

"Did I welcome you?" she interrogated coolly, looking up and letting her proud, quiet glance rest for a moment indifferently upon his face.

"Not this evening, certainly," he replied, with a little bitter laugh. "You showed me plainly enough how unwelcome I was."

"And you—— ?"

She smiled a little significantly.

Sir Hugh stifled an angry exclamation in his beard.

"Oh, I did not take the hint," he said coldly. "Plain as it was, we men can be very obtuse."

"Very," Cecil murmured softly, thinking in her aching heart that if she could make him angry it would be so much easier to reject his prayer.

"Yes, very," he repeated sharply. "Cecil"—the anger in his voice changed to passionate pain—"how can you treat me so cruelly? How have I offended you?"

"Offended!" she repeated coldly. "How could you offend me?—except, perhaps, by forgetting that only my friends address me by my Christian name."

"I beg your pardon," he said, stung more by her tones than by her words. "I apologize most humbly for so great a liberty."

She inclined the pretty head, as if in mute acceptance of his apology. She was still leaning back in her chair, but her hands were idle now; they were lying in her lap tightly clasped, as if their close pressure gave her strength.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

MEN'S DEEDS.—A few persons recognize how largely happiness is dependent upon generous emotions and sympathetic affections. Probably nothing else is so fruitful of real and permanent enjoyment as this. No one can cast a mental glance over his circle of acquaintances without perceiving that the happiest among them are not those most favored by external circumstances, but those who are blessed with kindly dispositions and generous impulses, those who are interested in the welfare of their fellow-men and active in promoting it, those, in a word, who are seeking to do good rather than to get good. While it is true that injustice and selfishness react upon those who practice them to their injury and distress, it is no less true that equity and benevolence react upon those who practice them to their happiness and best welfare. Though the route may be circuitous, though the time may be deferred, we may rest assured that our deeds, good and evil, will return to bless or to curse us; and whatsoever we sow, that also shall we reap. M. S.

ALL I have seen teaches me to trust the Creator for all I have not seen.

Bric-a-Brac.

PARROT PRAYERS.—Among some of the Hindoo sects, when a person is in the agonies of death, his friends exhort him to repeat the names of the gods; and, if he is so fortunate as to die with one of these names upon his lips, they consider it a sure passport to heaven. Many spend a large portion of their time in repeating the names of gods. Parrots are taught to do the same, and such a spokesman commands a great price, especially among business men, who imagine that, by owning such a parrot, their spiritual treasures are accumulating while they attend to their usual occupations.

BENEVOLENT WORK.—In Chunking, the capital of Se-Chuen, China, it is usual to see in the streets, after the shops have been shut, a number of street-peachers, arrayed in full clerical garb, expounding the teachings of Confucius. They are employed by a benevolent society, and the custom is prevalent all over China. Another benevolent society devotes itself to collecting waste-paper. The Chinese believe that, as writing was given to them from heaven, to devote paper bearing written or printed characters to vulgar purposes is desecration; and so all the paper the society collects is burnt outside the city in enclosures erected for the purpose.

ATHOLE BROSE.—The following queer story is told as to the origin of Athole brose, a peculiar mixture of honey and whiskey: There was once a terrible wild man of the woods who was a great nuisance to the lovely heiress of the honors and lands of Tullibardine in Scotland. Accordingly she let it be known that the slayer of this monster should be rewarded with her hand. At the particular desire of the lady a handsome young man in humble life entered the lists; and this was how he succeeded. At a certain hour in the day the monster was accustomed to resort to a hollow stone in the forest to drink. This hollow stone one day was filled with whiskey and honey. He drank it, and fell an easy prey to the handsome young man, who won the heiress; and ever since the particular mixture in question has been known by the name of Athole brose.

THE DANCING BIRD.—The forests of Nicaragua are the home of a dancing bird, variously called "Toledo" from its whistling note, and "Bailador," or "Dancer," from its curious jumping action. A naturalist has described their remarkable performances. Upon a bare twig about four feet from the ground, two male Bailadors were seen engaged in a song and dance. They were about eighteen inches apart, and alternately jumped two feet into the air, alighting always in the same spot. As soon as one bird alighted the other bird jumped up, their time being like clockwork in its regularity, and each "accompanying himself to the tune of "to-le-do"—"to-le-do"—"to-le-do," sounding the syllable "to" as he crouched to spring, "le" while in the air, and "do" as he alighted." The performance was kept up for more than a minute, when the birds found they were being watched, and made off.

HEAD-DRESSES.—The female head-dress is carried in some countries to singular extravagance. The Chinese fair carries on her head the figure of a certain bird. This bird is composed of copper or of gold, according to the quality of the person. The wings spread out, fall over the front of the head-dress and conceal the temples. The tail, long and open, forms a beautiful tuft of feathers. The beak covers the top of the nose; the neck is fastened to the body of the artificial animal by a spring, that it may the more freely play and tremble at the slightest motion. The extravagance of some of the East Indians is far more ridiculous than the above. They carry on their heads a slight board, rather longer than a foot, and about six inches broad; with this they cover their hair, and seal it with wax. They cannot lie down, nor lean, without keeping the neck straight; and the country being very woody, it is not uncommon to find them with their head-dress entangled in the trees; whenever they comb their hair, they pass an hour by the fire in melting the wax; but this combing is only performed once or twice a year. The inhabitants of the land of Natal, in Africa, wear caps, or bonnets, from six to ten inches high, composed of the fat of oxen. They then gradually anoint the head with a purer grease, which, mixing with the hair, fastens the "bonnets" for their lives.

SELFISHNESS in any form is death. To live beyond self is the true life, the true immortality of the individual.

ANGEL-VISITS.

BY REV. SAMUEL K. COWAN.

Do angels ever visit us?
As poets often sweetly sing;
Do angels visit mortals thus?
Or is it but a fancied thing?

If ever to the blind of sight—
If, unto hearts that blindly grope,
Your hand hath been a guiding light,
Your words have been a ray of hope;

If ever wrath were turned aside
By thee, by some soft answer stayed;
If, at sweet morn or eventide,
Ever your heart for others prayed;

If ever, by soft words and mild,
You raised a fainting spirit up;
If ever, to a thirsting child,
You held love's little water cup:

If ever you have striven to save
A spirit, wandering erringly;
If ever to the poor you gave
The cheerful gift of charity:

Tho' the dear Presence was unseen,
And tho' unheard the "hail!" it said—
At these bright times your heart has been
By some dear angel visited!

A FLOWER OF FATE

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WILD WARRINGTONS," "LIKE LOST SHEEP," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXX.—(CONTINUED.)

THERE was a small fire in the tiny grate beneath it; a larger one was unnecessary to-day.

It was almost "summery" out of doors, Mrs. Sadler said, notwithstanding the wind in the shade was just a trifle nipping.

"Ah, Lady Tracy—yes!" said I absently. "I suppose she is Lady Tracy by this time. She was engaged to the only son of the Earl of Starch."

"Fancy that!" said Mrs. Sadler, with a sigh.

I was not in the least surprised to learn that Aurora was married. Before—before I was ill I had known that the wedding-day was near.

Nor did it in the least degree sound extraordinary to me to hear my faithful friend spoken of as Viscountess Tracy.

Nothing astonishes one, I think—nothing seems odd, remarkable, or out of the common course—in the lassitude and prostration which follow upon the heels of a long sickness.

When the deadly enemy has been wrestled with and routed, the convalescent days not infrequently are marked by a languid indifference to the world's affairs—an indifference the "sad serenity" of which it will sometimes take a good deal to ruffle or to dispel.

At such a time one hears perhaps of the most astounding events, and receives the intelligence with an absent smile.

"Lady Tracy has been here constantly of late, has she not?" I inquired.

"Indeed, yes, Mrs. Darkwood—lots 'o times! Only you haven't known her like," answered Mrs. Sadler. "To-day 'owever she's coming earlier than common, because she's aware that you may sit up and talk with her. Ah, she've a warm and generous heart of her own, have that Lady Tracy; and no more pride about her," added Mrs. Sadler, "'an if she was still Miss de Vere!"

"Mrs. Sadler," said I abruptly, after a pause.

"Yes, 'm—I'm not gone."

"You did not nurse me alone—all by yourself, without help, I mean—did—did you?"

"Me? Lor', no, 'm!"

"Who—who was here, then?"

"Well, 'm, of course I did all I could. But you see there was the house to look after, and my two boys, and the other lodgers, and—and so a Holy Sister—Sister Dorothea her name was—came from ——"

"A Holy Sister! Do you mean a Sister of Mercy?"

"A sort of," replied Mrs. Sadler vaguely—"though it isn't to be expected that you'd have any recollection of her."

"No."

"She was a frightful object to look at, Mrs. Darkwood; but she was a real lady for all that."

"You mean her dress was frightful?"

"Yes, 'm. There, I declare the first time as I came in here and found her bending over you in her long black gown, and her chin and head bound round like a corpse's, as you may say, it gave me quite a turn inside, and that's the truth. All the same, 'm, when you came to look at her well—close—you saw then that her face was very sweet and very calm, and," said Mrs. Sadler earnestly, "it—it somehow made you think of heaven."

"I can understand."

"And she was as sweet and gentle as she looked, too," said Mrs. Sadler, "and always the same."

"I can believe it. And where is that good sister now?" I asked. "Sister Dorothea, I think you called her?"

"Oh, 'm, she's gone back to her convent! She left as soon as ever you were well out of danger—she was wanted elsewhere, she said, and that was more than ten days ago," was the landlady's reply.

"What is the name of the convent?" I inquired musingly.

"I am not quite sure," Mrs. Sadler answered: "but I believe she called it the Convent of St. Cordelia. And I fancy it's somewhere out Bayswater way."

"The Convent of St. Cordelia," I murmured to myself. "I will remember that."

Aloud I said—

"Of course it was your own excellent idea, Mrs. Sadler, to send for the good sister—to bring her hither to nurse me?"

"Mine? Oh, no, 'm!" said she promptly. "I'm a pore creature for ideas like. I didn't know what to do."

"Whose then?" I inquired, in mild wonder.

"Mr. Eversleigh's," was the landlady's unexpected reply.

Silence.

I lay back upon my heaped-up pillows, very still, very thoughtful, and with my eyes closed. I said no more—asked no more questions.

In that silence, as Mrs. Sadler, duster in hand, moved noiselessly hither and thither, we heard the sound of the muffled knock upon the street door.

The landlady opened the folding-doors and ran to the sitting-room window.

"Yes, 'm," she said—"here's her carriage! It's the Viscountess! I'll go and let her in."

CHAPTER XXXI.

"YES," Aurora was saying—it may have been twenty minutes or so later on—when Mrs. Sadler, in her best manner, had made us some nice strong tea, and had withdrawn to her area regions, "I daresay there are a great many things you want to know; but, now that we have managed amongst us to pull you so far on to the safe high-road to health, my dear Mrs. Darkwood, we are not—so don't fancy it—going to let you slip back for the want of a little judicious severity. I consider myself mistress in this room—do you hear?—and, moreover, I mean to be obeyed in it. On my road to you I stopped at Doctor North's; and he said that, nicely as you are getting along, you must yet be careful in more ways than one. Therefore it will do you no good to——"

"Dear Aurora, only to be quietly here and to look at you does me good, I believe," I murmured, interrupting her.

She nodded and smiled, and stroked a feeble hand of mine which lay upon the coverlet, her own shapely white one adorned with many a costly ring.

She wore to-day a magnificent dolman of figured velvet heavily bordered with fur; a gown of richest and darkest green silk, much trimmed with satin of the same hue and lovely old lace.

A large Rubens hat smothered in a mass of soft dull-green ostrich feathers; and a solitary band of plain and massive gold upon her left wrist.

Her fine healthy complexion was as clear as ever; her bright fair hair was twisted up into its usual graceful knot: the smile of Aurora, Viscountess Tracy, was the frank unaffected smile of the old Aurora Ramage. She looked beautiful.

Mrs. Sadler had wheeled my visitor's chair—a capacious, old-fashioned, chintz-clad and somewhat frowsy bit of furniture—conveniently close to the bed-head; and there Aurora sat, apparently in no hurry to go, chatting leisurely about all sorts of things, and with relish sipping her tea.

She had sent the carriage home, she observed, and should return by train to Arley Bridge—driving of course to Euston in a hansom.

"I shall never," said she merrily, "get over my old weakness for hansoms. The next present that Loftus gives me I will choose for myself, and it shall be a private hansom perfectly appointed; and I will drive about the Hertfordshire lanes in it all day long, and so make the Arley rustics gape and stare as they never gaped and stared in all their lives before."

"Is Arley Bridge then in Hertfordshire, Aurora?" I asked.

"Yes, my dear Mrs. Darkwood," replied she. "And to Arley Bridge I intend to ——"

"Do you not think," I broke in earnestly, "it is about time that you put aside—dropped for ever—that stiff 'Mrs. Darkwood' you seem so fond of? Will you not sometimes try, Aurora, to call me 'Flower'? I wish you would!"

She laughed, blushed deeply, and said—

"I should like to—if—if you are sure that it will not offend you to hear me."

"Offend me? Oh, Aurora!"

"Well, then, Flower," said she, beginning to stroke my hand again, "I intend, the very hour that you are strong enough to be moved from this dull house, to carry you off to Arley Bridge: and there you shall get some color, my dear, into that sad white face of yours."

"Ah, but—but I do not know about that!" mused I aloud.

"But I do," said my friend briskly. "What on earth is there to prevent you?"

"I—I have to think of—of the future, Aurora," I whispered.

"So has everybody. You can take your time over it and think it well out at Arley Bridge," was her cheery reply.

I smiled sorrowfully and doubtingly. Certainly at present the question as to what shape or course my future life should take was one that I had neither the heart nor the strength to grapple with thoroughly.

For a while, at any rate, it was a riddle that must rest; nevertheless, in these convalescent days, I was continually brooding upon a possible solution to it.

As the afternoon wore on Lady Tracy told me a great deal about herself and her new life at Arley Bridge; and everything of course was new to me, who had for so long, as it were, been a captive in utter darkness.

The village of Arley, it appeared, was in Hertfordshire, as Lady Tracy had said; and, although the place was not ten miles—indeed it was scarcely eight—out of London, the neighborhood all about it was fresh and beautiful country, with "real live rustics in the lanes and fields," as Aurora expressed it.

The chief house near the village was Arley Bridge; why "Bridge," though, nobody could tell, for there was nothing of the kind to be anywhere seen at Arley; its little winding stream in the meadows, where the watercress grew so abundantly for the benefit of Covent Garden Market, being here and there spanned by ancient planks which were very rotten in places and not at all safe.

Years ago, Arley Bridge, which was a pretty house, but not by any means a large one, Lady Tracy said, had belonged to Lord Tracy's godmother—a Miss Loftus.

When the old lady died, she left it, with everything in it and just as it stood, to her godson who bore her surname; with another and much finer mansion in Somersetshire. This old Miss Loftus had been very rich.

"And so," said Aurora, in the course of her narrative, "we spent our honeymoon at Arley Bridge. It was my wish; and Loftus, good fellow, was perfectly agreeable."

"What, didn't you go abroad for it, or—or anywhere else?" said I wonderingly.

"No, we didn't," said Lady Tracy, laughing. "We are going for it—a real foreign honeymoon—by-and-by. And then we mean to have a high old time!"

"But—but——"

"It was like this," she said more gravely: "I looked in here one day just before Christmas, in order to ask you to promise to be present at our wedding—which, by-the-way, was a very quiet affair; for the old folk at Starch are still inexorable, and are likely to remain so—and imagine my surprise, my grief, when—when," said Aurora rather nervously—"when I found how—how matters were! However they had, it appeared, sent to the Convent of St. Cordelia for one of the nursing sisters; and I—I was most thankful to perceive, dear that you were in good and safe hands.

"I also wanted to stop in the house," said Aurora, "so that I might assist Mrs. Sadler and Sister Dorothea; but Loftus wouldn't hear of it. 'You'd only be in the way, Aurora—there's no room for everybody,' said he; 'and I'll drive you over here from Chesterfield Avenue every day, if you like, to see how Mrs. Darkwood is getting along. Won't that do?' And so, as there was sense in what he proposed, I gave in; and—and in the end it was arranged like that, don't you see?" remarked Lady Tracy gently.

"I wanted then," she continued, as I remained silent—"I wanted at once then to put off the wedding until you had quite recovered. Doctor North thought so badly of—of the whole business; he could not guess how long—how long it might be about. The idea of being married and going away and leaving you behind in London, perhaps at death's door, or something remarkably like it, was exceedingly distasteful to me. In short, I wasn't going to have it. But Loftus, poor boy, looked very glum over this notion, and said—

"'Oh come, Aurora—that's foolish! You promised to marry me in January, or at the beginning of February at the latest, and I can't have you backing out of the bargain now; it isn't fair.'

"'Well,' said I, 'if I do marry you, Loftus, at the beginning of February, we'll spend the honeymoon within a reasonable distance of Bentham Street. Married or unmarried, for the present—I mean until things are brighter for my friend Mrs. Darkwood—I am going there to see her just as often as ever I can.'

"A happy thought struck his lordship.

"'So you shall, Aurora!' cried he. 'Why, there's Arley Bridge! The place is barely an hour's drive out of town; and from Euston you can get down to it in twenty minutes—with a quick train in something less. We'll content ourselves for a while at Arley Bridge. How will that do?'

"'Capitally,' said I. And so, Flower, that was how we managed it. Loftus drives or rides into town to his club or elsewhere whenever he feels inclined; and I, in like manner, am equally free and able to follow my own inclinations. As soon as you are well enough to travel, you are, my dear, as I have said, coming into the country on a long visit to us; and you will then see for yourself what 'a convenient little box'—as Loftus calls it—in every way is Arley Bridge."

"My true, true friend!" I murmured.

I could say no more. For, when one is sincerely and deeply grateful for real human sympathy and human kindness, one's gratitude is difficult to put into speech.

A dumb gratitude—a dumb thankfulness—is often the more eloquent, though it may not appear so.

At length Lady Tracy said she must go. It would never do if she were late for dinner.

Lord Tracy was at home by himself that day, and would be safe, remarked Aurora, to be waiting impatiently for her at their small wooden station at Arley.

She had told the footman to inform his master that she—the Viscountess—would return from town by train.

Still, now that I was pronounced to be "out of danger," and had Doctor North's full permission to talk in moderation and without excitement, I resolved that Aurora should not quit my bedside until she had further enlightened me with regard to—with regard to what was past.

As she was bidding me an affectionate good-bye, and heartily assuring me that I should see her again on the morrow, I put my arms suddenly around her neck and whispered—

"Aurora, where is—where is Daryl?"

"My dear, I cannot tell you."

"Do you not really know?"

"I would tell you this moment if I did."

"Does—does any one know?"

"Yes; I believe that your best friend knows."

"You are my—my best friend, Aurora."

"No, I am not," she replied calmly."

To this assertion I made no rejoinder, but trembled slightly as I clung to Lady Tracy, with my face hidden upon her bosom.

"Mr. Eversleigh is your best friend—the best friend woman ever had," said Aurora, in the same even tone. "You'll have to acknowledge it some day."

"No, no, no," I shivered; "he is nothing to me!"

"There are few men living like him," said Aurora boldly. "Remember that."

I was still very weak, a trifle was sufficient to unnerve me. I burst into a fit of helpless weeping.

"I declare solemnly," said Aurora, "that if you do not this instant stop those tears I will not listen to another word, I mean it, nor will I remain here another moment, but straightway I shall march out into the street and drive to the station as hard as I can go."

I feared that she was in earnest—that she would carry out her threat; so, making haste to dry my eyes, I said brokenly—

"Don't go! See—there, I am calm. I will not cry, Aurora; I am quiet again—indeed I am! But tell—tell me—have pity on me—what you have done with—where they have put my darling—my little Isla. Oh, my child, my child!"

Aurora held me close to her breast.

"We buried her," she answered very gently, "in Arley churchyard—a sweet shady old churchyard it is, as you will by-and-by see, dear Flower—and that is one reason why we want you to come to us."

"How good of you—how good of you!" I sobbed.

"Dear, it was Mr. Eversleigh's doing—not mine," said Aurora. "I told him that I somehow felt certain you would not like your darling to be lost in a crowded London cemetery——"

"Ah, no," I put in, with a tremor—"not that!"

"And he—Mr. Eversleigh—said immediately," Aurora went on quietly—"having of course heard from Loftus about our Arley Bridge arrangements—'Cannot we bury her, then, poor little soul, in Arley churchyard? Mrs. Darkwood would not mind that. You are her friend; and she would like her child—since she is not able to decide anything for herself—to be near you, I fancy.'

"'When she recovers, if Heaven be merciful, she should bless you for the good thought,' said I earnestly. 'It shall be done.' And it was."

"And I do bless you, Aurora," I said.

"Honor to whom honor is due!" said Lady Tracy obstinately. "You must bless and thank Mr. Eversleigh by-and-by. That, Flower, is your duty. We saw a good deal of him," she added, "whilst you were lying so ill, indeed met him very frequently; and my husband and he become quite chummy. More than once, in fact, he has dined with us and stayed for the night at Arley Bridge. Loftus likes him immensely, now that he knows more of him; and so do I," announced Aurora stoutly.

I could find no reply to this, so kept dumb, my face still hidden from the fast-fading light.

"I thank Heaven," cried I presently, with a shudder that was irrepressible, "that I did not—that I did not really do so fearful a thing—that dreadful deed! Oh, Aurora, if—if I had actually murdered him—Daryl—my own husband! . . . On that night I must have been mad—mad——"

"What, do you remember all that?" she whispered soothingly. "But, dear, it is past; do not let it hurt or trouble you now. You could not help it, Flower—it was part of your illness; we all understand that—doctors and everybody."

"I must have been mad!" I moaned again.

"You were, dear," said Aurora gravely. "Forget it!"

"With every day," I said hoarsely, "it all comes back to me by degrees—more clearly—more hideously; and—and—— Oh, Aurora!"

"Forget it, Flower," she said again, "as you would forget an ugly dream."

"I cannot. There are some things one never can forget. Nevertheless, with all my heart and soul, I do thank Heaven that I was hindered in that wicked deed——"

Figuratively speaking, Aurora pulled me up short.

"And do you likewise recollect, Flower," she said quickly, yet with a kind of tender daring and gentle reproof in her caressing manner and in her grave low voice, "that it was Mr. Eversleigh who most assuredly, look at it how you will, was the instrument of Heaven in hindering——"

With a petulant sob I broke from her, sank back upon my pillows, and turned my face away from her.

"You are determined, it seems, Aurora," I said, "that I shall not at any rate forget my infinite obligations to Mr. Eversleigh! He is fortunate in having so staunch a champion!"

She laughed softly and good-temperedly, gave me a lingering kiss which I did not return; and, when I looked around me, she was gone. But I heard her call out in th

next room, when the folding-door were shut—

"You will see me, Flower, to-morrow. Be brave, dear; cheer up!"

* * * * * *

On that bright late March day when I said adieu to Bentham Street I left Mrs. Sadler's house alike poor in health and in pocket.

My illness altogether had been a grievously expensive one; my careful hoard, earned at Mr. Binkworthy's theatre of varieties, had by this time sadly dwindled.

Still I was able to pay every farthing I owed, to make Mrs. Sadler a handsome present, to send another to the Convent of St. Cordelia, which holy retreat, I learned, was entirely supported by voluntary contributions, and, ah me, then to think of the future with what courage I could!

I was in my front-room, mine thenceforward no longer, dressed in my new mourning, and waiting for Lady Tracy and the carriage.

My trunks were already piled in the gloomy passage; and Mrs. Sadler sat amongst them, crying dismally because I was going away.

"Do not cry, Mrs. Sadler," I said hopefully. "I will come and see you whenever I can; and I shall not forget you—believe me."

"It's a cruel world," wept the poor widow—"all ups and downs and nothing certain, here to-day and gone to-morrow, heigh-ho!"

"Mrs. Sadler," I said suddenly, recalling with a pang of unutterable sorrow the tender-heartedness and shy sympathy of the shadowy old man who had been so good to my lost darling, "where is old Mr. Jones? I should like to see him once more to say good-bye to him before I go. Is he upstairs?"

"Why, bless the poor dear lady," cried Mrs. Sadler forlornly, "he left me long ago! He went away, 'm, almost directly you was taken ill. But he paid everythink; there's nothin' owing—pore lone old gent; and I've never set eyes on him since."

"Strange!" murmured I.

"Yes, he always was a curious old soul," said Mrs. Sadler, dolefully shaking her head; "and now I'm losing you, 'm. Oh, dear, oh, dear, it does seem hard!"

Before I could in any wise try to comfort her we heard the near rolling of carriage-wheels and the brisk clatter of horses' hoofs.

A splendid equipage had driven into Bentham Street, and a footman was knocking at Mrs. Sadler's front-door.

"It's the Viscountess," wept the landlady.

Yes; Aurora had arrived at the appointed hour, to carry me off to Arley Bridge.

CHAPTER XXXII.

"NOW mind," had said Lady Tracy—"you are here, dear Flower, at Arley Bridge to be idle all day long; to be out of doors as much as possible, sitting, say, occasionally under those nice old trees yonder, when the leaves get a little thicker and the sun grows a little warmer; to trouble your head about nothing whatever; in short, to take life, don't you know, just as smoothly and as drowsily as did those odd lazy folk in that wonderful land where it 'seemed always afternoon!'"

I shook my head, smiling mournfully. Already had I formed dim plans with regard to my life in the future.

With more earnest thought, with more prayer for high guidance in the matter, I should, I fancied, ere long see my path more clearly to the right course ahead of me.

In spite of the deep melancholy which at times possessed me—a melancholy that assuredly was not to be marvelled at, all that I had suffered, all that I had gone through being borne in mind—I could not help feeling that life at Arley Bridge was a very pleasant and wholesome business.

The house was by no means small, I found; nor was it too large.

It was a commodious and decidedly old-fashioned abode in which, from the moment of crossing its threshold and entering the roomy old hall, a stranger might look around him and somehow at once feel at home.

Built of white stone which, with time and storm, had taken a grayish, greenish hue, it stood surrounded by about five-and-thirty acres of lovely park-land, well back from the broad high-road; so that only the chimneys and upper windows of Arley Bridge were here and there through the trees visible to passers-by.

A private path across these grounds, narrow, winding, and copse-shadowed, led one to a lonely wicket in the low flint wall of Arley churchyard.

Lord Tracy himself was as genuinely kind to me, as solicitous for my comfort beneath his roof, as was his handsome wife; it seemed to me that his marriage with Aurora had vastly improved the young man.

Her bright sensible companionship, her shrewd practical character, and her active, cheerful example in everyday affairs and duties had bestirred, as it were, to a like activity the better and higher qualities that had hitherto lain dormant in the man.

Certainly he was no longer the selfish, affected fop, the idle, almost effeminate dandy I had mentally designated the lover of Miss de Vere on my first introduction to him at Thangate.

He had become more natural, more manly, more healthily energetic; and consequently he was more pleasant and companionable in every sense.

He had always been proud of Aurora: and now, I verily believe, she was growing proud of him.

Every day, when the weather was warm and fine, I went with Aurora for a long and delightful drive—Lord Tracy sometimes asking whether he might accompany us—and so explored the charming country neighborhood in the midst of which Arley Bridge was situated.

The April showers were nourishing the fresh young grass and awakening to vigorous life the moist bursting leaves.

The lush and radiant green of the meadows, the tender foliage of the trees, the fair fickle blue of the sky, with its fleecy swift-sailing cloudlets and the frolicsome wind from the south that drove them along—all these things were most beautiful and in a high degree soothing to the jaded spirit of a melancholy invalid.

Nevertheless I was well aware that with each too quickly passing day I was growing stronger, undeniably stronger—how else indeed could it be, surrounded as I was by every luxury and by every care?—and with better health of course came better heart.

Sooner or later however—I never lost sight of this fact—my sojourn at Arley Bridge must come to an end.

And then, after that, there was my future. Well, so I told myself, I should be ready!

"I have ordered the carriage this morning," announced Aurora one day after breakfast—a bright breezy day without a cloud in the sky—a day on which the larks sang madly out of sight and the tree-tops bent and whispered together of the glory of the coming summer—"to take us to Ealing Common. Loftus has an engagement in town, and won't be home until dinner-time; and so we ourselves need be in no hurry to get back to Arley. If you don't mind, dear Flower, we are going to call on my mother; she will be so pleased to see you again. She knows that you are stopping with us at Arley Bridge; and she will feel hurt and slighted perhaps if I do not take you to see her."

"What," I cried involuntarily, "has Mrs. Ramage, then, left Shepherd's Bush—left Chesterfield Avenue?"

"Two months ago. I thought I had mentioned it," replied Lady Tracy. "Dear old mother—bless her!—she's in clover now, thanks to my own good generous boy."

I was truly glad of this opportunity of once more meeting Mrs. Ramage; for I had been haunted by the fear that Daryl (Heaven knew where he was now; I did not; and neither Aurora nor her husband, it really appeared, could enlighten me!) had in all likelihood taken leave of Chesterfield Avenue, characteristically forgetting to settle his debts.

I could not endure the thought of this injustice to Mrs. Ramage, and was most anxious, if it were in my power to do so, to put matters straight in that direction at least.

Mrs. Ramage's suburban villa was merely a good hour's drive from Arley Bridge—at all events, it was only an hour's drive in Lady Tracy's luxurious barouche, with its marvellously easy springs and splendid thorough-bred pair; and, bowling delightfully along the Hertfordshire roads that would by-and-by take us into the adjoining county of Middlesex, I told Aurora of the fear which troubled me.

"Good gracious," exclaimed she, smiling—"pray do not mention the matter to my mother. You will be sure to offend her—or rather to wound her feelings—if you do. She is 'quite the lady' now, she says, and means to forget all about those days when she let apartments in the Chesterfield Avenue. Besides, Flower, even supposing it to be as you apprehend, why, it doesn't signify a rap to my mother. She is more than comfortably off in her new home, as you will see."

Lady Tracy chatted on briskly, presently observing that her mother's house was called the Oaks; though at present, in the way of trees, there was naught to be seen in the front garden of the villa; some clusters of severe-looking shrubs, however, bordered the carriage-drive.

There was also a half-moon patch of lawn in front, perfectly kept, and with a new yellow iron garden-seat upon it.

Mrs. Ramage, dressed in a purple shot-silk gown and a cap with salmon-colored ribbons flying from it, an immense brooch and a great many other ornaments as well, received us in her own impulsive fashion.

She seized my hand within both her own, and for some time shook it and hugged it silently, unable to say a word.

But the queer duckings and wrigglings that I remembered so well were in their way very eloquent; and speech, after all, was hardly necessary.

We sent the carriage into the town for an hour or so, and stayed to luncheon, and listened to Mrs. Ramage's description of her new and easy life, and to her reiterated praises of that noble-hearted young man, her son-in-law, Lord Tracy—the tears rising to the good soul's eyes whenever she mentioned the Viscount's generosity.

But, warned doubtless beforehand by Aurora, Mrs. Ramage contrived to avoid all allusion either to my late illness, my vanished husband, or to my cruel loss; though more than once she had stammered, checked a sentence, coughed awkwardly; and I felt as certain as if she had spoken outright that she had been upon the brink of inquiring after the dear Captain.

"When," promptly answered Lady Tracy, with her farewell embrace—"when you have been to Arley Bridge, mother. You are always coming, and you never come."

Mrs. Ramage wriggled, and protested that her son-in-law's house was too fine a place for her, she was happy where she was.

Perhaps some day, some future day, hinted Aurora's mother, when she, Mrs. Ramage herself, had become more accustomed to her own good fortune, and could think of her clever daughter's exalted position without that delicious tremor of excitement which seemed to take away her breath and to make her head spin round, she would come and spend at Arley Bridge a few quiet days with Lord Tracy and his wife—or, let her say, wherever they might be living at that dim future time.

At present, pleaded Mrs. Ramage, with her most eloquent wriggle, she could promise no more, indeed she could not, Aurora must not ask it of her.

Driving leisurely homeward, Lady Tracy exclaimed abruptly:

"O, by-the-way, Flower, did I tell you, my dear, that I met old Binkworthy in Oxford Street yesterday?"

"No," said I, with a slight start and a little quiver of the breath, "you certainly did not tell me."

Somehow or other, in these calm, lazy, convalescent days at Arley Bridge, no thought of Mr. Binkworthy had arisen, spectre-like, to disturb their sweet tranquillity.

He had passed of late clean out of my mind.

"Did he say anything about me, Aurora?" I asked with palpable anxiety in the next breath.

"Yes. But do not be frightened," replied she. "I don't fancy he'll trouble you any more. He has got hold of a fresh star—this time from Australia—who, he says, is drawing tremendous audiences. She calls herself Signora Something or other; and the Levity is crammed nightly, according to Mr. Binkworthy."

I drew a sigh of relief.

"What did he say about me?" I inquired.

"He merely remarked that he hoped you were all right again, or something of that sort; but the whole manner of the man, my dear Flower," said Aurora, frowning, "was offensive in the extreme, to say the least of it. The carriage was standing outside Grant and Lavender's—I had stopped there for some more of that lovely ecru lace I showed you the other day—and Binkworthy, as he talked, with both arms leaned heavily over the side of it, and called me 'Countess' in the most objectionable style. 'I am not going to tolerate this,' thought I, 'with Banks stuck there upon the pavement not a yard away from him. I'll cut his familiarity short.' He said something else, winding up the observation with another odious 'Eh, Countess?' that made my blood tingle. I looked stonily over his hat, called sharply to the footman, 'Home directly, please tell Willis,' and the next minute Mr. Binkworthy was reeling backward from the carriage-step, and flinging, I have no doubt, a vigorous malediction after my vanishing chariot-wheels."

Aurora chuckled at the recollection of the manager's discomfiture, reminding me that even in her "old Levity days" she had always succeeded, in any hostile business with him, in getting the upper hand of Mr. Binkworthy.

It was close upon the stroke of five when the tall elms of Arley village, with the rooks flapping and cawing restlessly around their clumsy nests of black sticks and twigs, loomed in sight through the thin blue distant haze.

Already were the high hedges beginning to wax fragrant and sweet subtle grassy odors to float upon the still air.

A pigeon was cooing in a thick plantation near to the roadside.

The sun was westering and growing languid above the copses of Arley Bridge.

"I have been thinking," said Aurora, gently breaking a silence that had fallen upon us—"indeed, to speak openly, Loftus and I, only last night, were together discussing the matter, and he said what a splendid idea of mine it was—I say, dear Flower, I have been thinking what a pleasant arrangement it would be for me, at any rate—if you would consent to stay with me always. I love you very dearly," said she, with an unaffected and earnest simplicity that touched me keenly, "and that you know without my saying so; and, if you would but agree to remain with me as my lifelong companion, it would give me unspeakable happiness——"

I laid my hand upon hers, and stopped her.

"Impossible, Flower!" she echoed cheerily. "Oh, no, don't say that!"

"You have your husband, Aurora," said I mournfully; "you will soon have troops of friends, little ones perhaps by-and-by; you will not always want me——"

"Troops of friends?" she echoed, with a short light laugh which had however no particle of bitterness in it. "I don't know where they are coming from! Why, bless you, Flower, not a soul in the neighborhood worth naming has yet been to see me; and probably nobody worth naming ever will! Of course Loftus's friends are in a manner mine; still, there are others, don't you know? Every society journal in London, you see, came out with something disagreeable, something would-be humorous and sarcastic, when Loftus married me; the profession of the woman whom Lord Tracy had fallen in love with was an open secret from the first. Loftus says, in his vague good-natured way, 'Never you mind, Aurora, old girl, they'll all come round in time;' and I tell him frankly that, for aught I care, they may 'all,' whoever they be or represent, please themselves; I do not care a button. I speak for myself. I should be sorry indeed, though, if Loftus got to care, that is all. I should hate to see him fret about it. But that's not the point in question," said Lady Tracy, more briskly. "I am sure, Flower, that you will not pain me by refusing to grant a favor which I ask of you from the bottom of my heart."

Here, thought I, was precisely the moment to let her hear the determination at which I had arrived. So I spoke.

"Aurora," I said sadly, "it's of no use, I cannot do it! My mind is made up. Grateful as I feel to you, and ever shall so long as I live, what you wish is impossible. You would suggest perhaps in favor of your loving scheme that I—I—that I have now no child, no home, no husband. True. All the same, the last-named may at any hour reappear and compel me, or strive to compel me, to live with him again. And that, Aurora, I could not endure. I could not—I could not—after—after all that has happened through Daryl's conduct! I could not bear such torment and live! No, dearest friend; I want to hide myself from him and from the world—to hide myself in some retreat where Daryl would never dream of looking for me, where it would be possible to forget the hollowness of the world and—and to prepare myself for heaven. Life has no charm for me now. And so, dear Aurora, believe me this is no hasty decision on my part; it is the serious outcome of much meditation and prayer. I have resolved to go to the Convent of St. Cordelia, to tell the good sisters my life-history, and ask them to take me in there—in their midst to give me shelter from the——"

Whilst I had been speaking, Aurora's foot, I noticed, kept tapping the carriage-mat.

At last it seemed that she could no longer restrain her vexation and impatience, for she burst out with—

"Upon my word, Flower, this is too foolish—I was positively going to say idiotic—of you! What on earth shall I hear next, I wonder? I shall send for Doctor North; you can't be so well as we have thought; you must be slipping back, or you would never talk in this gloomy, morbid, ridiculous strain—for it is too ridiculous! You are not joking, are you?" she broke off brusquely.

I smiled sorrowfully, but did not turn my head to meet her bright indignant eyes.

"You know well, Aurora, that it is not like me to jest upon such a subject; it is a very solemn matter if you will only reflect a moment. I am in earnest," I answered quietly.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE "LOST SOULS."—A graphic picture of the condition of those unfortunates who are fitly described as "lost souls" is drawn in a work on Siberia by a recent Russian writer.

But few of the exiles ever attain to the possession of a "house"—by which is meant a miserable hut. Most of them are in reality the bondsmen of the Siberian peasants, by whom they are hired; that is to say, they remain in their debt as long as they live, and are satisfied when they can get money for drinking on holidays from their masters.

But as the majority of exiles are by profession rogues and vagabonds who are afraid of work, the number of fugitives is constantly increasing. They steal, rob, and plunder whenever a chance offers, and thus intensify the natural antipathy of the settlers against the class of the deported.

The peasants have every cause to be incensed against them; for, beside suffering from the malpractices of the convict class, they have to bear the cost of the erection and preservation of prisons for the exiles, organize hunts for the capture of the runaways, provide guards for them, and find the taxes which cannot be raised from among the deported class.

But the greatest gaps in the ranks of the exiles are caused by the almost systematic escape of the latter from forced labor and from the convict settlements. No less than fifteen per cent. of the deported escape during transport.

Many of them are shot down like wild beasts by the peasants and natives, and an observer of Siberian life made a very true remark when he said that Siberia would scarcely have been able to overpower the runaway exiles if the peasants had not annihilated them.

The most extreme measures to check the system of escape are the hunts by the natives, organized by the Russian Government. The native receives three roubles if he delivers the prisoner, "dead or alive," to the authorities.

The people are provided with good arms and ammunition, so as to make hunting the escaped prisoner a perfect success. One of those few who managed to escape was seized in his native village, and when brought before the court he said—

"For two years I have wandered about, have swum through rivers and seas, have crossed Siberian forests, passed through steppes and mountains, and no one has touched me—neither man nor beast; but here, in my native village, I have been seized and cast into chains."

The escape from forced labor had become so common that the administrators of convict establishments were in the habit of calling out, when receiving prisoners—

"Whoever wishes to stay, let him take clothes; he who wants to run away will not need them."

It should be observed that the clothes left behind by escaped convicts, so to guard against capture, are the perquisites of the prison authorities.

CUSTOMER: "I can't pay you to-day: you see, the shoemaker has just been here, and—" Tailor: "Yes; I met him on my way up, and he said you'd put him off because you'd got to pay the tailor to-day. So here's your bill, sir."

TWILIGHT.

BY ADELAIDE MOORE.

Come to me, darling! I am weak and weary,
And all day long upon life's way I've toiled;
But now life's sky looks clouded, dark and dreary,
And Hope's white pinions with Doubt's dust are soiled.
But, come thou to me while the sunset lingers,
And Twilight drops, with darkly silent fingers,
Her star-wrought curtain over all the world.

This is the hour when we seem the nearest
To those we love, though they are miles away;
This is the hour when all our hopes held dearest
Return again within our hearts to stay.
Heaven seems near, 'mid twilight's shadows clinging,
We seem to hear the songs our lost are singing
In that far land, within the courts of day.

ONLY A GIRL.

BY M. E. B.

CHAPTER III.

NOTHING was talked of now at Fairbank but the great steeplechase which was shortly to come off in the neighborhood.

Branston steeplechase was an established affair; there was generally a cavalry regiment quartered at Branston, and the officers kept up the race.

It came off regularly every autumn, and was taken a good deal of notice of in the sporting world.

It was this race which had brought Frere Berkeley down to this part of the country now; he was to ride the favorite, a horse named "Moloch," belonging to Lord Streatfield, a friend of Frere's.

"Moloch's safe to win, take my advice Tommy, and put every penny you've got on Moloch," said Cornet Supple, an excessively military young man, whose moustache was coming on fast, and who therefore considered himself at liberty to patronize his elders to a large extent, his own commanding officer being excepted, of course.

"Thanks; advice is a thing I have long given up taking," remarked Mr. Otway, drily, without removing the cigar from his mouth.

He and the young cornet, with two or three other men, were standing out on the steps of the house enjoying their after-breakfast tobacco in the sunshine, which, though it was November, was bright and warm.

"Well, I don't mind saying that I have backed Moloch pretty heavily too," said another military man. "I know what the horse can do; and as for the rider, there's not one of the others comes anywhere near Frere Berkeley."

Douglas M'Kenzie had sauntered up, and had heard the last speaker.

"Weren't they saying something yesterday in Branston about Moloch's temper?" he asked, moodily.

Douglas had been very moody lately—ill-tempered his friends called him.

"Oh! they are always saying something in Branston," cried young Supple. "Don't you believe it, there is nothing the matter with Moloch's temper."

"And if there were, Frere could manage him. There never was a horse beat Frere yet," said the other young soldier, confidently.

"M'Kenzie," said Otway, suddenly, "will you take a turn with me? I have a word to say to you."

Douglas assented rather ungraciously, and they walked off together.

Mr. Otway seemed undecided as to how he should open his communication: he took off his hat and rumpled up his rich hair, put on his headgear again, a good deal on one side, pulled out his handkerchief and blew his nose, pushed his spectacles upon his forehead and then took them off altogether, only to put them on again directly, with various other proceedings indicative of embarrassment, and looked so mysterious all the time, that Douglas soon lost patience.

"Speak out, man," he said, testily; "what is it you have to say?"

"Well, it is about your cousin," began Otway, looking nervously round, and speaking almost in a whisper.

"I had much rather you did not speak of my cousin, Mr. Otway," said Douglas, haughtily.

He would have turned away, but the other detained him.

"Look here," he said, "if you have any regard for your cousin and wish to save her from an unpleasant scrape, you'd better listen to me. M'Kenzie, that Berkeley is a bad man!"

"What the deuce do you mean?" asked M'Kenzie, turning round upon his friend in a sudden fury.

Then as Otway in a few rapid sentences told him what he meant, Douglas listened in silence, only swearing an oath or two under his breath as the tale went on.

"What is that old dunce Elmer about?" he asked, when he had heard all.

"He doesn't suspect anything, don't you see? That's what it has been done for."

"What a conspiracy," muttered Douglas; and his hand was clenched hard as he walked on in silence for a minute or so.

"I say, whatever you do in the matter—and I suppose something will be done—for heaven's sake don't go to Elmer. He would half kill her, and there would be an awful row," said Otway, anxiously.

"I never thought of going to him. The man is a brute and a snob, and would be certain to make a horrible scandal, through his want of self-control. All I've got to do is to get Mabel out of this hideous entanglement, if I can; as for the rest of the affair, thank God it is not my business," in which thoroughly English view of the matter Mr. Otway quite concurred.

The next morning, as Mabel Burniston, dressed for walking, was crossing the hall she was stopped by her cousin Douglas who had evidently been waiting to intercept her.

"Mabel, I must speak to you," he said, authoritatively. "Come in here;" and he opened the door of the library.

"What a bore, Douglas! What can you have to say? I'm in a hurry," spoke Mabel, pettishly; but she followed him into room.

Douglas carefully shut the door. Mabel sat down, and went on putting on her gloves, wondering what was coming.

Douglas came and stood looking down at her.

"Mabel," he said, gently, "you never had a brother. I want you to let me be your brother for the time being. Will you, Mabel?"

The girl looked quickly at him.

"I am sure you have something dreadfully disagreeable to say;" she said, "or you would not have begun like that."

"I have something disagreeable to say; and I hardly know how to say it," replied Douglas, looking, as he felt, extremely uncomfortable.

"Tell me straight out at once, that is the best way," said his cousin lightly; adding, in the same tone, "only I warn you, if it is anything about Frere Berkeley, I shan't listen to it. I am tired of hearing him abused."

Then Douglas M'Kenzie saw that what he had to say would be difficult indeed in the saying, and he plunged desperately into the subject, not choosing his words.

"Look here, Mabel," he said, "you are deceived in that man; he is behaving disgracefully. He is making love to another man's wife, and is using his flirtation with you as a blind."

"How dare you say such things to me, Douglas?" flashed Mabel, rising quickly from her seat, her face crimson with indignation.

"Because I would save you from being mixed up in a most disgraceful affair," said Douglas, firmly. "Mabel, take my word for it, and ask no further; but for heaven's sake, have—have no more to do with that man."

"What nonsense! I know what you mean—that stupid old story about Mrs. Elmer; but I do not believe it," said Mabel.

She spoke rather hesitatingly, for looking at Douglas she could not help seeing that he was very much in earnest, and her heart sank and her face paled, for Mabel Burniston loved Frere Berkeley as well as it was in her to love anybody—besides herself. She loved him.

And now she was told by one whom she could not but believe—for Douglas never lied—that this man had been playing with her, making a tool of her.

It was a heavy blow.

Douglas saw that it was, and when she said that she did not believe it he saw that she did, so he answered nothing, but stood twirling his moustache nervously and thinking very uncharitable thoughts of Frere Berkeley.

"I don't believe it," reiterated Mabel and then suddenly she threw herself on to the sofa and burst into tears.

Douglas was not prepared for this, and, as men do sometimes at the sight of a woman in tears, he "lost his head."

"Mabel, dearest Mabel," he cried, falling on his knees beside her, "don't distress yourself about this affair. I will take care that you shall no longer be insulted by that fellow's attentions. Oh, if you would only give me the right to protect you, Mab, my darling—if you would promise to be my wife!"

Her head was turned from him and buried in the sofa cushions, but he had her two hands in his.

Mabel was sobbing, and hardly heard what he said at first, but at the words, "if you would promise to be my wife," the hands were suddenly wrenched from Douglas's grasp, and the girl started to her feet.

"Oh, I see it all now!" she exclaimed, furiously. "You come to me with this scandalous story, thinking to advance your own cause by injuring him in my estimation. You first tell me a——"

"Stop!" said Douglas, sternly. "Do you know what you are saying?"

"Yes, I do know," Mabel went on, excitedly. "I am saying that I do not believe you, and I do not. I can see it is all a plot. You guessed that I cared for him, and you invented that story, Douglas M'Kenzie——"

"You must not say any more," interrupted Douglas, very calmly, though his face was white to the lips. "A gentleman does not condescend to answer such accusations as those except in one way, and when they come from a woman he cannot answer them at all. Mabel, just now I asked you to be my wife. Now I tell you that with my will I will never speak to you again!" and before Mabel could answer, he was gone.

Douglas M'Kenzie meant what he said; to be accused of telling a deliberate lie was an insult that he could never forgive.

He went away desperately hurt and fearfully angry, and yet when he became a little calmer he could not but see that it was partly his own fault.

He had brought it on himself by his bad management; and the short time that passed between his unfortunate interview with his cousin and his leaving Fairbank, he spent partly in her service.

But Mabel, as she thought of it, made no excuses for him.

She only said complacently to herself, as she re-arranged her hair, and removed the traces of tears, alone in her own neat room:

"I could not have believed it of Douglas, but it only shows that men will do anything when they are jealous."

At luncheon time she went down. There were not many assembled round the table, but Frere Berkeley was there, and Mrs. Elmer and Mr. Otway.

Douglas M'Kenzie was not to be seen, and Lady Wycherly looked oddly at Mabel when she came in, and directly the meal was over rose and signed to her sister that she wished to speak to her.

But just then Frere Berkeley addressed Mabel.

"Miss Burniston," he said, "it is a lovely afternoon for a drive, and I have ordered my new dog-cart round after luncheon. You promised to try it some day; will you come to-day?"

"I should like it very much," said Mabel, taking care not to look at Lady Wycherly, who she knew was making signs vigorously.

"Then will you go and put on your hat, for I see the trap is at the door?" said Frere.

Mabel went, and in a very few minutes re-appeared, ready for the ride.

"Are you not almost afraid to trust yourself in that rather dangerous-looking vehicle, Miss Burniston?" asked Otway, who was standing by criticising the new dog-cart.

"If I had not known that it was perfectly safe, do you think I should have asked Miss Burniston so far to honor me?" said Frere haughtily, and with a look that said very plainly, "Mind your own business."

To Mabel he said:

"The horse is quiet enough; you are not afraid?"

"No, no, not with you," answered Mabel.

Frere pressed her hand as he carefully helped her up, but a momentary look of distress had crossed his face as she spoke.

"A safe return to you!" cried Otway; and Frere scowled savagely at him as he mounted to his place beside Mabel.

The groom left the horse's head, and he dashed away. At first the drive promised to be a silent one.

Frere Berkeley's quiet horse somehow gave him quite enough to do to manage, and Mabel was thinking—thinking in spite of herself and against her will—of what Douglas had told her in the morning, and she did not feel at her ease with her companion.

The feeling grew, and her answers when Frere began to talk to her were constrained and cold.

When they were nearing Fairbank on their return Frere said suddenly:

"Your manner has changed to me to-day, Mabel, especially since we have been alone together. Why is it? What have I done?"

"Oh! nothing," said Mabel confusedly; "I did not know I was different."

"But you are, and I think I know why. People have been warning you against me, and you are half-inclined to believe them; is not that so?"

His dark handsome eyes were steadily regarding her face, and Mabel was too much confused to reply.

"You need not speak," he said; "I see your face answers me."

Just then the horse half shied at a freshly-painted white gate, and Frere was occupied with his driving for a minute or two.

When they were once more going along quietly, he said, with another steady look into the blue eyes of the girl beside him:

"Mabel, I am going to ask you to trust me. I want you to promise to believe nothing that you may hear against me for the next four days. When the race is over, it shall all be explained. Will you trust me till then?"

Mabel thought she knew what he meant, and she said that she would trust him.

Frere thanked her, and then they were at the gates of Fairbank.

"Would you mind walking up to the house?" Berkeley asked his companion, as he drew up at the lodge. "I want to take this beast round to the stables myself, and there is not much time before dinner."

So Mabel walked up the long drive by herself, while Berkeley went rapidly round to the stables.

There he did not linger for a moment; but after a hasty glance at his watch took his way to a part of the grounds called the "Shrubbery," which was near the house, but could be approached by a circuitous path from the stables.

He entered the Shrubbery, and coming to a small clear space where there was an old rough garden-seat beneath a solitary laurel, which had grown to an unusual height, he stopped and looked round, as if expecting someone.

At the same instant a woman glided from behind the great laurel, and came forward.

It was Lilian Elmer. She was wrapped in a dark waterproof cloak, but the shapeless garment could not quite hide the grace of her figure, and through her thick black veil the whiteness of her sweet fair face appeared.

No greeting passed between the two, but Frere took a small white trembling hand in his, and held it as he said:

"Well, is he going?"

"Yes," was the answer.

"And you are to remain here?"

"Yes."

"That is all right then, if only you can keep up your spirits and your strength, Lilian."

"Oh, Frere, I am so wretched. I feel as if I never could go through with it," sobbed the unhappy woman.

"Lilian, you have promised me. There can be no going back now!" said Berkeley, sternly, and his tone calmed her at once.

Lilian Elmer feared many things, but most of all she feared Frere Berkeley's displeasure.

"I wish the race was to come off two days earlier," said Frere, meditatively, as he walked back to the stables, while the slight darkly-wrapped figure sped away towards the house, through the gloom of the November evening.

It was all arranged. For nearly three years Lilian Elmer had borne the ill-humor and the worse usage of a detested husband, and often during that wretched time she had struggled hard against her love for him who was not her husband; but she had given way at last.

The next few days were to see the end of her bondage.

Mr. Elmer was to be away on business for nearly a week, and his young wife was to be left behind; and on the day of the grand steeplechase she was to make her escape.

When the race was over, and the party from Fairbank had returned, she was to slip out again.

Berkeley's servant would be waiting with the dog-cart at a little distance from the house.

He would drive her into Branston, where she would meet Frere, and they would then travel together to London. This was now the sixteenth, and the race would not come off till the twentieth.

Three long days had to be lived through yet; three days more of hypocrisy and deceit, during which she would have to appear calm and indifferent, while Frere must keep his role as Mabel Burniston's favored lover.

CHAPTER IV.

AS Mabel entered the house that evening she was met by her sister.

"Come here directly, Mabel," she said; "I want to speak to you in my own room."

Mabel followed her upstairs and into her dressing-room.

"Now," said Lady Wycherly, after hastily shutting the door, "now I should very much like to know what you mean, Mabel, by going out driving with that man this afternoon, after what Douglas told you this morning?"

"So Douglas came to you with his absurd story, did he?" said Mabel, smiling and calm.

"Mabel, you must be crazy!" cried Lady Wycherly. "Here have I been in a state of agony all this afternoon, knowing this dreadful thing, and unable to imagine what is to be done, and now you talk calmly of an 'absurd story!'"

"I am not crazy, my dear Mary, but I think poor Douglas is. The fact is that boy is mad with jealousy. He was determined to make mischief between me and Frere, and so he raked up this story. I saw it all directly."

"It is impossible," said Lady Wycherly, "quite impossible that Douglas should behave in such a manner. He believed what he said, I am sure."

"Possibly, but that does not make it true," retorted Mabel. "I tell you it is all nonsense, Mary," she went on. "Frere Berkely as good as proposed to me this afternoon, and I consider myself engaged to him."

She looked so happy and confident as she spoke that her sister could only believe her.

"Well," said Lady Wycherly, resignedly, "I give it all up. Douglas comes to me this morning with a most extraordinary story, and implores me to send you home at once, or your name will be compromised, and all sorts of dreadful things will happen. And you come to me this afternoon and tell me that you are engaged to the very man I was to save you from. I really don't know what to do!"

"Leave me to manage my own affairs, and don't listen to slanderous stories," said Mabel, lightly, and she walked over to a mirror and began admiring the effect of a pretty new hat she wore.

"But I hardly think that Douglas would have spoken as he did, unless he thought that he had good reason," began Lady Wycherly again.

"Somebody has furbished up the old story, then—the story you told me when I first came—and has been entertaining Douglas with it," said Mabel, quietly, as she continued to admire her pretty face in the glass.

"But it was not the old story. It was Mr. Otway, who, it seems, had heard or seen something, and who told Douglas."

"Otway!" exclaimed Mabel, in a tone of supreme contempt. "That little red-haired mischief-making snob is always finding some new wonderment; but no one but a simpleton like Douglas would believe a word he said!"

And Mabel went off, leaving her sister just sufficiently in doubt to prevent her interfering further in the matter.

In the drawing-room after dinner that evening, Mabel and Frere Berkeley were playing bezique. Sir George came up to them.

"Understand I have to congratulate you, Berkeley," he said; "and as Miss Mabel must be congratulated too, I suppose, though I'd get it both done at once, you know, ha, ha! Bless you, my children."

Mabel colored violently, and Frere looked up rather surprised, but he did not lose his presence of mind for an instant.

"Thank you, Sir George. Very kind of you, I'm sure," he said, coolly. "Many thanks for self and partner."

"Ha, ha! 'Self and partner!' Yes, yes, very good, ha, ha!" chuckled Sir George, with whom a small joke went a long way; and as he spoke very loud, every one in the room heard, and before that evening was over, Mabel and Berkeley had been congratulated on all sides.

Mabel was inclined to be vexed at first. "Why did you not contradict Sir George?" she whispered to Berkeley.

"Why should I?" he whispered back with the look and the smile that before this had conquered Mabel's foolish vain little heart; and after that she accepted the position and her friends' congratulations without protest.

For the next three days Frere Berkeley openly took the place of Mabel Burniston's accepted lover, and Mabel took no pains to conceal her joy and triumph.

She was very much in love and very proud of her lover, and she let every one see it.

She seized every opportunity of patronizing Lilian Elmer, who accepted the situation without the least show of resentment, yet was evidently pained by it, and avoided Mabel as much as possible.

Meanwhile Tommy Otway kept his spectacles on and watched the play.

The day of the race came. The morning was cloudy, and there was a threatening of rain; but, whether it rained or not, the ladies from Fairbank must be at the race, and at twelve o'clock they were preparing to start.

Mabel came down, dressed to perfection in a coquettish costume of black velvet and green satin.

Black and green were Frere's colors. She looked charmingly pretty, and the little flutter of anxiety and excitement she was in about the race made her only more fascinating.

"But our horse is sure to win, isn't he, Mr. Supple?" she said, turning the light of her blue eyes upon that young gentleman.

"Certain, if it were only to please you," stammered the gallant cornet.

Mabel smiled graciously at him. Then she turned to Sir George Wycherly.

"Oh, George, I hope it is not going to rain," she said.

"Spoil your fine bonnet if it does, eh?" said Sir George. "Good morning, Miss Elmer; I see you are wise, you are prepared for rain."

And the fussy old baronet eyed with approval Mrs. Elmer's toilette.

Her gown was of some thick dark material, very plainly made, and her bonnet was chosen to suit the gown. She looked pale and nervous.

"It is a very gloomy morning," she answered, with a little shiver, as she moved to the window, and looked out on the gray banked-up clouds.

"Yes, and you ladies would have been far more comfortable in closed carriages, as I said; only nobody ever listens to me," grumbled Sir George.

"Well, it is too late now, my dear," said his wife; "the break's at the door; and we had better start at once if we are to be there by one o'clock."

It was past one when they arrived at the course, and the horses were already being cantered up to the starting point. There were five horses.

The first that appeared was ridden by a jockey in a scarlet jacket; the next was blue; then a yellow and a pink passed slowly along, and then, after a few moment's delay, the favorite appeared, a large fiery-looking black horse, ridden by a green jacket and black velvet cap.

Frere looked very pale, but the way he managed the animal he rode was grace and ease itself.

There was a pretty general cheer from the crowd as he took his place with the others; and Mabel, standing up in the carriage, clapped her hands enthusiastically.

"The green's your color, isn't it, Miss Burniston?" said an officer of dragoons, who just then sauntered up to the Fairbank break.

"Oh yes, I am sure he will win," cried Mabel.

"The odds are six to one on him; take you at six to one in gloves if you like," said the dragoon.

"I am quite ready," laughed Mabel, and some other men came round, and she was busy arranging small bets till the bell rang.

Lilian Elmer sat very still and quiet in her corner of the carriage, only when she heard the shout which told they were "off" she looked up eagerly for a moment as the clouds flashed past, and her fair face brightened and then grew pale as before.

The start had been good, and for a few moments the five horses went almost in a line, then three drew ahead, the green, the yellow, and the pink.

"Why does he let those two keep so close to him?" said Mabel, impatiently; "he could leave them behind in a minute if he chose."

"Wait a bit, wait a bit," said Sir George, "we shall see what he can do presently."

"We shall see no more from this point," said Lady Wycherly; "let us drive down to the end of the course and see the finish."

Sir George gave the order, and they drove down and took up a position near the last jump, a break-neck-looking place, being an unpleasant combination of bank, hedge, and ditch.

"Sure to be some pretty tumbles here, and a broken arm or leg or two," remarked Mr. Otway, with a pleasant grin at Mabel.

Mabel was standing up again and looking earnestly through her glass.

She took the slightest notice of Mr. Otway's observation, but Lilian Elmer turned paler than ever, and clasped her hands tightly on the rail in front of her.

They came on, only three now—the scarlet, the yellow, and the green, the other two far behind.

Green was leading, but scarlet was very close, yellow at some little distance; over another fence they came still in the same order.

Then came the water jump. Moloch cleared it gallantly, but the horse ridden by the scarlet jacket came to dreadful grief; he slipped on the bank and rolled into the stream, carrying his unlucky rider with him.

Frere's friends gave a cheer, and Mabel clapped her hands with delight as the green jacket was now seen flying on alone and rapidly nearing the last jump, just beyond which was the winning post.

They reached the place, but the great black horse, instead of clearing it at once as he had the other fences, suddenly swerved aside, and for a moment was quite beyond his rider's control.

"Confound it," exclaimed one of the men standing near the carriage, "the beast's temper has broken out just at the last moment!"

"Never fear; Berkeley will manage him," said another.

The yellow jacket coming along steadily behind saw his chance, and put on a tremendous spurt; he was quite close when at last the black horse rose at the jump.

He rose, but as if purposely, he failed to clear it; his hind legs dropped and entangled themselves in the hedge, and horse and man fell heavily together, the horse in his struggles rolling over and over his rider; and while an excited crowd gathered round, and with some difficulty the struggling animal was removed, bringing to view Frere Berkeley's prostrate motionless figure, the yellow jacket quietly trotted in and won the race.

Mabel had seen the dreadful fall, and, giving a piercing scream, was about to spring from the carriage, but Lilian Elmer was before her.

In a second she had darted through the crowd, and was at the fallen man's side. Raising his head on her lap, and while her tears rained down on the insensible face, the poor woman, regardless of the wonder of the bystanders, poured forth wild and incoherent words of love and grief over the dead body of him for whom she had been about to sacrifice everything.

"Speak to me once more; oh, Frere, my darling, speak to me!" she moaned.

A doctor came up, and she gave place to him.

The examination did not occupy more than a moment. The doctor turned to the bystanders and said quietly:

"He will never speak again; his neck is broken. Death must have been almost instantaneous."

Lilian Elmer heard, and with a faint, despairing cry once more threw herself on her knees beside the body.

"Who is the lady?" asked the doctor; "wife, sister—what?"

"She is not his sister, and she is somebody else's wife, and the girl he is engaged to is sitting in that carriage there," whispered someone to the medical gentleman, and somehow the story spread, and presently there was a staring crowd round the Fairbank carriage, where Mabel sat recovering slowly from a dead faint.

When, thrusting her aside, Lilian Elmer had rushed to the scene of the accident, without having time to think or wonder, she was about to follow her, but Lady Wycherly laid a restraining hand on her sister's arm.

"Let me go to him, Mary," exclaimed Mabel. "Look! she has his head on her lap, she is taking my place. What does she mean by it?—what does it all mean?" she cried, astonished and indignant, and once more she made an attempt to leave the carriage.

Her sister caught her dress.

"Mabel, for heaven's sake control yourself," she said, earnestly. "It is bad enough as it is, but if you cannot keep calm it will be much worse."

"What does it all mean?" asked Mabel again, in a bewildered tone.

She was very pale, and was supporting herself with difficulty by the side rail of the carriage, as she still kept her eyes fixed on the group assembled close by the fatal last fence.

No one could look upon the frantic grief of the poor woman who was the centre figure of that group, and doubt what it all meant to her.

"My poor Mab," said Lady Wycherly, "I am afraid it means that Douglas was right!"

And then Mabel fainted.

"Who are all these dreadful people?" she whispered, when she came to herself and saw the mob round the carriage. "Oh, Mary, take me away, take me home quick! don't let anyone see me!" she said, imploringly.

"Yes, dear, directly. Supple has gone to see if he can get us a close carriage," said Lady Wycherly.

"Oh, any carriage, only let us get away this instant!"

Just then the young cornet came up with a brougham he had managed to borrow.

With a very serious face he helped the ladies in, shut the door, and gave the coachman his orders. No wonder Cornet Supple looked grave.

Not only was he in the midst of a tragedy of real life, but he had lost a good deal of money.

During the first part of that drive home Mabel seemed in a sort of stupor, but presently she roused herself, and asked

"Is he dead?"

"Yes, poor fellow, he is dead," answered Mary Wycherly, gently.

Then Mabel began to cry hysterically, and this lasted not only till they reached home, but all the evening afterwards.

Lady Wycherly dismissed the maid, and waited on her sister herself. She brought her some tea and sandwiches after she had undressed her, and made her go to bed.

"Come, Mabel," she said, "you must eat and drink, or you will be seriously ill, and I shall have to bring the doctor to you."

"Don't let anyone come near me," cried Mabel, burying her face in the pillows; "I shall never be able to face anyone again as long as I live."

"What nonsense! you have done nothing wrong," said her sister.

"But to think that I should be treated so," sobbed the poor beauty.

"It is the mortification she feels most," said Lady Wycherly to her husband that night, when Mabel having at last fallen asleep, she had left her to the care of her maid.

"Yes, that would be so," said Sir George, adding: "By Heaven! I shan't soon forget the agony of that other woman. I can see her now, clinging to the body as they put it on a stretcher to carry it away. It was awful!" and the stout baronet, who was not given to emotion, fairly shuddered.

* * * * * *

"It was an awful affair, and caused some sensation at the time, I can tell you," said Cornet, now Captain, Supple, telling the story two or three years afterwards; "and what made it worse, as far as talk went, was the way that old dunce Elmer behaved. Instead of keeping it quiet, you know, he told everybody how his wife was about to elope with Berkeley the very day he was killed, showed lots of people the letter the poor thing had left him, and which it seems he got a day earlier than was intended, for he happened to come back from London that same day. All through he behaved like a cad as he is, and of course that made it all the more unpleasant for Mabel."

"Served her quite right," growled Otway, who was present.

"Well, I don't know about that," said Supple; "but it cured her of flirting at any rate. She left it very much, her mother took her abroad, and she only came back a few months since."

"And now she's married," remarked another man.

"Yes, to an elderly widower with half a dozen children. Queer end for her."

"No queerer than the end of some other 'belles of the season' that I have known," said Otway.

"What became of the other woman, did you say?" asked another of Supple's listeners.

"Oh, she died, poor thing; fell into a decline, and died in less than a year after."

"Best thing she could do," replied Otway.

"What's the matter with you to-night, Tommy?" asked Supple, very pleasantly "You are more spiteful even than usual."

"I am going to a wedding to-morrow, perhaps that's it," said Otway with a little grin.

"A wedding!—whose?"

"Douglas M'Kenzie's," replied Otway, shortly.

"Ah, yes," said Supple, "remember now hearing he was about to take the fatal step. Why didn't he marry his cousin after all, I wonder?"

"Wasn't such a dunce," observed Mr. Otway, with much meaning; and the others laughed as he walked off.

[THE END.]

BIRD-LIME.—Bird-lime is a tenacious sticky substance used to smear twigs or sticks for the purpose of catching birds that may alight thereon. Japan is probably the only country in which it is regularly manufactured on a large scale. It is made from the bark of the mochi-tree, an evergreen with thick leaves. The manufacture extends over several months. The bark is taken from the trees in June and macerated in water about forty days, after which it is beaten in a mortar with a pestle shod with iron, the flat under-surface of which is armed with spikes projecting downward. When the mass in the mortar becomes glutinous, it is taken out and washed in water, to remove as much of the rough outer bark as possible. It is then again pounded and treated in a vessel of hot water, on which it floats. Here it is again manipulated by the workmen for the purpose of disengaging the remaining particles of bark. After this it is again washed in cold water. These processes of pounding, boiling, and washing are repeated until about nine-tenths of the original mass is washed away and the material becomes sufficiently clear and pure. It is then a dull whitish color, extremely viscid, and of a very gummy consistency. When well prepared, it keeps good for a long time.

A MOSAIC heart pendant of forget-me-not pattern, lately seen, was suspended from a bow-knot of the same style.

Scientific and Useful.

TOUGHENING PAPER.—Paper is rendered as tough as leather by mixing chloride of zinc solution with the pulp in making it. The greater the concentration of the solution the tougher is the product, which can be used for making boxes, combs, roofing, and even boots.

A RUBBER-LINED THIMBLE.—Thimbles lined with india-rubber are now employed, and are said not to fall off so easily as the ordinary unlined thimble. They are also warmer to the skin, and free from the metallic "rust," which sometimes takes the form of verdigris, a substance of a poisonous nature.

A TRAVELLING CHAIR.—A native inventor has taken pity on the book-keepers and clerks who duties compel them to make frequent changes from one book to another at the same desk. He has devised for them a chair running on a kind of miniature railway, in such a manner that a push of the foot upon the foot-board will move the chair to right or left as may be desired. This enables the worker to move from one book to another with greater ease, and far less confusion than is occasioned by the getting down from his seat and into it again.

DISINFECTANTS.—With regard to disinfectants, there is but one true disinfectant—viz., fire. The majority of so-called disinfectants are simply deodorants. The idea that tobacco-smoke or the odor of camphor is destructive of contagion is still extensively held, though it is simply absurd. A true disinfectant is a substance that will kill the germ or living particle in which the contagious principle resides, or through which it is conveyed. Of true disinfectants, heat is the most reliable, though others are not to be despised, such as carbolic acid, chlorine, and sulphurous acid gas.

AN AMMONIA LOCOMOTIVE.—A new fireless locomotive has been tried in New Orleans for driving street-cars. The motive-power is obtained by evaporating ammonia after its liquefaction. The expansion of the liquefied ammonia causes a cooling of the cylinder, but this is counteracted by an ingenious provision of the inventor, which is not yet made public. The ammonia after being liquefied under pressure is led into the apparatus, and the expanding gas, after operating the piston which drives the wheels, is absorbed into a weak aqueous solution of ammonia, from which it is afterwards separated and again condensed into the liquid form, thus serving for further use in propelling the car.

Farm and Garden.

SALTING.—To avoid the forgetting of the practice of salting stock it is now suggested that a lump of rock salt be placed in the manger, so as to have it within easy reach of the animal whenever it may desire salt.

COLLIE DOGS.—To those who may not be familiar with collie dogs it may be stated that they will not drive sheep or cattle unless first trained to do so, though the supposition on the part of some is that such dogs perform the work by natural instinct. They are more easily taught to drive stock than any other breed of dogs, but they will not do so unless taught.

OATS.—The oats is a splendid food for young animals, because, compared with corn, straw, etc., it is rich in muscle and bone forming elements; and this also makes it a splendid food for work animals. Corn should be fed sparingly to work animals, during the summer especially, as it is a heating food. It will pay to make the grain ration of oats in the morning and at noon.

MOWING.—Many farmers neglect to clear their mowing fields of stones, sticks and other obstructions to the mowing machine until the grass gets so high that it is difficult, if not impossible, to see them, and so the knives of the mower are injured if not broken; this is very poor policy, for on most mowing fields, if the work be done before the grass starts much, the labor of removing all obstructions to the harvesting machines is comparatively light.

CORNSTALKS AND GRASS.—An Iowa genius has introduced to notice a new fuel, which is destined to take the place of coal in the prairie countries. This fuel is made by grinding cornstalks and coarse prairie grass together, moistening them, and then pressing the pulp into blocks about twelve inches long and four inches thick and dried. It is claimed that one block will give an hour's steady heat, and that the fuel can be produced for $3 per ton.

A USEFUL PLANT.—Farmers and others often have considerable trouble with the loose soil of newly-made embankments, so apt to slip or be washed away before they are covered with vegetation. According to a French railway engineer, the best plan is to sow the banks with the double poppy. Several months elapse before grasses and clovers develop their feeble roots, but the double poppy germinates in a few days, and in a fortnight has grown sufficiently to afford some protection to the slope, while at the end of three or four months the roots, which are ten or twelve inches in length, are found to have interlaced so as to retain the earth far more firmly than those of any grass or grain. Although the double poppy is an annual, it sows itself after the first year.

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The Lesser Shadows of Life.

The rue plant has been made the emblem of life's lesser sorrows. Generally speaking, if rue be handed to us by Fate, we must take it; and it is best to do so at once, and at once determine to wear it jauntily, thus ensuring a speedy end to its existence as far as we ourselves are concerned, for it is a plant which cannot live if courageously handled, and which begins to fade the moment we realize its presence and determine to make the best of it.

Can there be shown a greater difference in the wearing of one's rue than by the manner in which different people accept the infliction of an illness? Where one individual will send for a doctor apparently only to discover what not to do, and to do that and nothing else, and will insist upon attendance that is rendered useless because it is utterly and entirely disregarded, and on medicine that goes to water the plants, and will spend his time on seeing how disagreeable he or she can make life in general to the unfortunate people about them, how sweetly another will bear exactly the same species of trial!

Again, there is the rue worn by those who are plain, or have some slight personal defect; there is, moreover, that bitter rue to some folks that comes when the first wrinkle appears, or the first gray hair comes unbidden to lie among the brown; and there is that yet most bitter of all—the dreadful rue of loss by death, that one must wear at first silently and in the darkness until the first keen agony is over, and we dare come out into the sunshine and walk once more among our fellow men.

With the first, that of any special defect, the wearing of the rue makes all the difference. Look for a moment on yonder sour-faced man, the bump between his shoulders starting doubtless from his heart, and lying there more heavily than ever it does on his back; and then turn to his counterpart living two streets away, and ten chances to one if you ever remember that the latter is deformed at all.

No; you can recall his cheery face, his small hands, his bright eyes, the tone of his pleasant, musical voice, and you remember all the information he gave you on a thousand subjects, but you cannot really assert that he has a hump before or behind, for you can only state confidently that he is charming, and you hope to see a great deal more of him before your ways separate entirely. Truly these two men wear the same piece of rue in an entirely different manner.

There are some even who refuse to see rue when death hands it to them; who plunge recklessly into gaiety, shocking their little world by the heartless indifference with which they regard even the custom of standing apart for a while, enwrapped in ordinary and decent black; and making mothers and fathers gaze apprehensively at their little ones, wondering if they, too, would go to theatres in gray dresses when the grass is not green upon their graves, and causing bitter thoughts in many a heart of the shortness of human affection and the slenderness of what should be the strongest ties of all.

But gradually even the most careless recognize that the world shrinks from heartlessness, and that sooner or later the disregarded rue makes itself felt and seen, and they too come to a time when they shed the tears, and feel all the sorrow, they at first refused to recognize, and find it all more bitter than it would have been had the tears been shed at first, when the sorrow was fresh.

Then there is the sufferer who not only accepts her rue, but enwraps herself in naught beside garments trimmed and laden with the herb of sorrow; who twines rue in her hair, and gives rue to all who come to see her; until one by one her friends shrink away from her and leave her alone in her gloom, because they cannot see that they help to lighten her sorrows the while they are wasting their own lives in a darkened, tear-clouded atmosphere.

To such a one as this the singing of the birds, the laughter of a child, the shining of the sun are all intolerable burdens, and the real misery and sorrow are intensified a thousandfold, because the mourner will not allow sorrow to do her work, and will not rise again when once she has been stricken down to the earth.

Contemplate, as a relief to this sombre picture, the brave, good soul who wears her rue with a difference. The sorrow that has fallen to her share only opens her eyes to the misery of others.

If a child has been taken from her, just as he was becoming her dearest and her best, she sees in other children the pretty eyes that lie closed below the daisies. Has her husband left her alone? She sees in other young girls the girl she once was, and she smiles upon their love-affairs, helping them on, because she, too, has known how short, how brief, love can be, and through her own great pain has discovered the way to make others happier. Or she turns to her poorer brethren and devotes to them the life that to others appears bereft of all that makes it worth living.

It is impossible for any one of us to go through life without having, sooner or later, to wear our rue; and if we take it with a smile, remembering that happiness is always somewhere in the world, and that Time always renders rue innocuous by the mere passing of his wings, we shall be able to understand that it is indeed well to consider how we can best wear our especial portion, so that it shall not obtrude itself on our friends, nor embitter our lives with its presence.

Just as any weak organ of the body may be improved by exercise and culture, so may the memory. One method of cultivating the memory is to see to it that the impressions received are properly and truly registered and repeated until they become familiar, and, so to speak, a part of the brain structure. Another is to be careful and not register impressions which are valueless, and thus lumber up the mind with useless trash, but to judiciously forget what is not essential. Forgetfulness is essential to remembering. We do not store up the unsound, but cast it away as soon as we can; and so we should cast away the useless ideas that come and go in our active life.

That is a very lovely disposition that excuses the faults of others albeit severe with its own, on the plea that there is some reason, unseen and unsuspected, which, were it revealed, would go far to modify a harsh judgment. We are told, or we observe in some fellow-creature, actions which our taste or our principles condemn, or we are pained by something which a friend says or does. Let us not have patience only, but also let us be tolerant, since we cannot know all the difficulties with which another must contend; nor can we estimate the weights with which another is handicapped in the race of life.

Success is not confined to any one object or to any class of objects. It is always a relative term, implying something at the back of it which may or may not be desirable or good. Some men plan robberies, others devise schemes of philanthropy—all of them desire success. The question is not, shall men desire to succeed or not, but what shall they desire to succeed in? What should be their undertaking, their hope? If it is a good one, the more they desire and determine to succeed, the better; if not, it is the aim itself that is to be attacked and abolished.

A great portion of all the worst mischief, negative and positive, that ever afflicted the world is traceable to what people erroneously call conscience, but which is often only a hateful compound of ignorance, prejudice and vindictiveness. The duty of man is to improve those faculties which enable him to think and act correctly. He must make his conscience a good enlightened conscience; then, and then only, will he be entitled to honor and credit in acting upon it.

Life grows more interesting as it goes on only to those who find each day bringing in some fresh knowledge of the world in which they live—some new experience giving value to all that has gone and is to come—knowledge not so much to be gained from books and from actual study as by going about with one's eyes open, and thus bringing daily more power of seeing and of entering into the interests and pursuits of others. Every moment of life should be improved.

Character is property. It is the noblest of possessions. It is an estate in the general good-will and respect of men; and they who invest in it, though they may not become rich in this world's goods, will find their reward in the esteem and reputation fairly and honorably won. And it is right that in life good qualities should tell; that industry, virtue and goodness should rank the highest, and that the really best men should be the foremost.

It is the power of attention which in a great measure distinguishes the wise and the great from the vulgar and trifling herd of men. The latter are accustomed to think without knowing the subject of their thoughts. In their unconnected rovings they pursue no end, they follow no track. Everything floats loose and disjointed on the surface of their minds, like leaves scattered and blown about on the face of the earth.

If thou wishest to know what thou art, look at the monuments of the dead as thou passest along the road; there thou wilt find the bones and light dust of kings, and tyrants, and wise men, and of those who prided themselves on their blood and riches, on their glorious deeds, and the beauty of their person; but none of these things could resist the power of time.

Every man is rich or poor, according to the proportion between his desires and enjoyments. Any enlargement of riches is therefore equally destructive to happiness with the diminution of possession; and he that teaches another to long for what he shall never obtain is no less an enemy to his quiet than if he had robbed him of part of his patrimony.

Faith builds in the dungeon and the lazar-house its sublimest shrines; and up through roofs of stone, that shut out the eye of heaven, ascends the ladder where the angels glide to and fro—prayer.

I will not much commend others to themselves, I will not at all commend myself to others. So to praise any to their faces is a kind of flattery, but to praise myself to any is the height of folly.

Wisdom is a fox, who, after long hunting, will at last cost you the pains to dig out. Wisdom is a hen, whose cackling we must value and consider because it is attended with an egg.

Be always more ready to forgive than to return an injury; he that watches for an opportunity of revenge, lieth in wait against himself, and draweth down mischief on his own head.

Every failure is a step to success; every detection of what is false directs us towards what is true; every trial exhausts some tempting form of error.

The World's Happenings.

Geneva, Nebraska, has an Indian base ball club.

American oysters are now sold in London at 25 cents a dozen.

Judge Orr, of Kankakee, Ill., has a goat which runs his lawn-mower.

A snail's pace has been ascertained by experiment to be a mile in 14 days.

Cincinnati has a secret society for providing poor girls with pretty dresses.

It is said that 126 clergymen sailed from New York for Europe in a single day recently.

The mainspring of a Waterbury watch is 24 feet long. The spring of an ordinary watch is 28 inches.

A thousand clocks a day are said to be sent from New England to Europe, Mexico and South America.

One of the papers in that State wants to change the motto of Alabama from "Here we rest" to "We take the cake."

The Indians with the Wild West show in London call the Prince of Wales "The Great-Chief-Without-a-Scalp."

A company has been organized to supply Boston with steam, or rather hot water, for domestic and mechanical purposes.

The running expenses of the village of Estelline, Dakota, for the last year, were $48, the chief item being the marshal's salary, $18.

A cent an acre was all that some of the thousands of acres in Oneida and Herkimer counties, N. Y., brought at a sale the other day.

Postmaster Ira Keen, of Friendsville, Wabash county, Ill., was born in 1809, and is believed to be the oldest postmaster in the United States.

The funeral of John B. Holmes, of Plainfield, N. J., was attended recently by seven women, each of whom asserted that she was his widow.

A Laurens, S. C., judge told a jury that if they convicted the defendant they would be paid for serving, but if they failed to convict they would get no pay.

In Fall River, Mass., recently, a barrel of beer exploded, and not only instantly killed Patrick Clery, who was about to lift it, but also wrecked the saloon.

A pocketbook which he carried in his inside pocket over his heart successfully defended a Sandwich, Michigan, man from a bullet fired by a fleeing burglar.

A physician, a health inspector and a policeman are the force appointed to vaccinate the unvaccinated Italians of Newark, N. J., and they expect to have a lively time of it.

A young girl attacked a sneak thief in Newark, N. J., the other day, threw him on his back, and held him there until assistance arrived. She had seen him steal a hat from a hat store.

A boy named Card, at Hayesville, near Salem, Oregon, died from the effects of a wound in the abdomen, caused a few weeks ago by a croquet mallet, which had slipped from the hands of a companion.

The onyx of the finger-nail is the little half moon at the base of the nail. The onyx is carefully cultivated and polished by the Creoles of New Orleans to show that they have no black blood in their veins.

Willie Morris, a 12-year-old hero, who saved from drowning two 6-year-old sons of a petty officer of a regiment stationed at the Halifax garrison, received from the overjoyed parents ten cents as a reward.

A steam omnibus, which is intended to run regularly over country roads, is said to be running now in Dresden, Saxony. It is managed by two men and carries 46 passengers, with considerable freight.

Mme. Tussaud, the London curiosity-shower, now exhibits Queen Victoria's first doll, first shoes and first gloves, and various other memorials of the royal nursery; also a piece of Her Majesty's wedding cake.

A St. Bernard dog, Merchant Prince, owned by John N. Moore, of Melrose, Mass., and said to have been the largest and heaviest dog in the country, if not in the world, his weight being 220 pounds, died recently.

The King of the Tonga Islands dresses in well-made European clothes, which set off his handsome figure, but he can get no civilized shoe to fit him, because his feet are so large and have so enormous a development of heel.

A Berlin physician says he has discovered a new disease, already firmly established among telegraph operators, but fortunately confined to them. The continual tapping on the telegraph key causes the operator's finger nails to drop off.

In the list of letters advertised as remaining unclaimed in the Perth Amboy postoffice recently is one addressed to a gentleman who staggers through life under the megalosymic: "Ralyoosthaiy Tolopsis Alemakovus Malysand Dojeborsh."

One of the most remarkable thefts on record is reported from Whatcom, Washington Territory, where a thief stole an entire orchard, just planted, hiding his work for a time by sticking willow twigs in the holes where the fruit trees had been.

It took a Green River City, N. Y., couple just 30 minutes to form an acquaintance, conduct a courtship and finish off with marriage. The scene of this speedy performance was a restaurant, where the bride officiated as a waitress. The groom was a transient customer.

A wonderful thing happened in a Southern State recently. A Northern lady, Mrs. Eaton, died, and a white handkerchief was folded in four layers and put over her face. When they took the handkerchief off there were four distinct pictures of the lady on it the size of a quarter of a dollar. Spirits of camphor had been put on the lady's face just before her death.

THE GARDEN GATE.

BY C. J.

Two little forms outside the gate,
Who hour by hour in patience wait;
Four wistful eyes as bright as stars
Peeping with wonder thro' the bars:
Four little hands that long to hold
Bright flowers, or apples red and gold:
Two shrill young voices that would say:
"Give us some flowers or fruit to-day!"
Only—what little tongue could dare
Ask such a boon from lady fair?

She comes! and down the velvet walk
Moves gently, and with silver talk
Beguiles the time: her comrades glide
In pleasant converse by her side,
They do not see the eager eyes
Who watch them with a glad surprise.
To rustic judgment they must seem
Like white-robed angels in a dream:
So fair, so graceful, and so blest
In such sweet garden bowers to rest,
And no doubt plucking many a gem
Which seems so far away from them!

Alas! how oft our mortal fate
Keeps us outside the garden gate!
Almost we feel we might be there,
Wandering amid those scenes so fair;
Almost our fingers seem to clasp
Bright flowers that still elude our grasp:
Some adverse fortune seems to say:
"'Tis not for thee: so go thy way!"

Amber Cosgrove.

BY J. E. PANTON.

MY name is Amber Cosgrove, and such is my good fortune that I can write in three words the history of my girlhood. Happy — happier — happiest! Those thin, clear, up-and-down strokes tell little to others; to me they tell of a past for which I cannot be too thankful.

I write a hand like my great-grandmother's, so Ainslie tells me, neat and formal and old-fashioned—epithets which I think describe me as well as any I can find for myself.

And so in those neat, formal, old-fashioned strokes on the smooth white paper see pictured, not only my life, but my habits and ways. And the dashes between—what of them? They are the breaks in the even flow of a peaceful life; passages rough at the time, but now not unpleasant to remember; for through them I passed from being Amber M'Michael to become the wife of a man as noble and brave, as generous and true, as my own father. And even of Ainslie I can say no more than that.

There is a scene which is often in my mind when I sit and think of the past. But it is no passage in my own life; it took place before I was born, and in a far-distant land.

Try to picture a dark still night in one of the central provinces of India; down a jungle path roughly paved with logs, lit only here and there by the moonbeams piercing through the branches overhead, some dozen persons, Europeans and natives, are hastening, stumbling and falling in their hurry, but never pausing. Behind them there is a glare in the sky far too deep for the moonlight, brighter and redder even than the glow which hangs over a great city at night. That crimson illumination is no ordinary sight; it means murder and bloodshed, for it is the blaze of the Feringhees' burning houses.

Already you can hear the cries of the pursuing Sepoys, so ferocious in the hour of their long-delayed vengeance that the blood of men, as brave as the two who bring up the rear of the flying party, may well run chill with fear. Not on their own account, but for the women and children who are being hurried along by their panic-stricken servants.

Well may Major Cosgrove's breath come and go, for his wife and children are of the party; vainly he tries to pierce the darkness in front, and to distinguish the gleam of the river, beyond which is comparative safety. He knows that hardly three miles on the other side of it is a station; and the demons behind may hesitate to pursue where every step brings them nearer to danger.

While he gazes in front his brother officer keeps turning back his head in the direction of the pursuit. Neither speaks his thoughts; but the Major, his face white and set, tries the chambers of his revolver, and his companion sees him and nods.

He knows, without explanation, for whom the cartridges so carefully tapped home are intended. Ha, the water at last! There it is, between its dark wooded banks, rippling quickly with a thousand pale flashes over the shallow ford.

But is it not too late? A louder cry rings through the night air; the pursuers have sighted them, and are redoubling their speed. The race to the ford is for dear life. The fugitives gain it, and are halfway across before the enemy reach the bank. Even then escape seems impossible: a dozen bullets plash the water, and the Sepoys, encouraged by their own numbers, are crossing the ford to come to close quarters.

Breathless and dripping the women and children are pulled up the bank, and the officers follow—one of them. The other, with a stern grasp of his friend's hand, and a forward gesture of encouragement or farewell, with a muttered 'God bless you!' turns back into the water, and crouches under the bank like a stag at bay.

The Major hesitates; but the lives of his wife and children are at stake. He hurries on with a stifled curse. Then at intervals, amid the desultory fire of the Sepoys' rifles, he hears the sharper cracks of a revolver and shrill cries of rage and pain.

The sounds are getting fainter in the distance, when there rises a fiendish yell of triumph. "God rest his soul!" mutters the Major in his turn.

So—there is a swelling in my breast and a choking in my throat that always come when I think of this—so it was that I never saw my father, Captain M'Michael, of the 110th, but learned, as soon as I was old enough to understand it, the tale of how he died to save his friends, with his back to the bank and his face to the foe. And he did not die in vain.

The little party reached the English camp in safety, and the story of his death has become a tradition in his regiment.

And now I, his daughter, am sitting in the porch of a quiet cottage home amid Herefordshire orchards, idly gazing out upon the shadow-flecked lawn, sloping from my feet down to the swiftly-flowing Teme, hastening by on its way to join the Severn.

Crossing the river on my left is an old bridge, wide and bulky and many-arched; in front a gentle hill rises from the stream, and covering this hill is a little town as picturesque and irregular, as old-fashioned and time-stained, as can be found in any country of England.

A massive church tower, old as the Domesday, crowns it, rising proudly amid mingled trees and roofs. The ruins of the castle are hidden by the shoulder of the slope; but from my post, at the door of our black and white cottage, I can see up the wide street which leads from the bridge until the prospect is closed by the gloomy arch of the Broadgate, a great leafy elm waving above it.

It is summer, and there is a humming of bees hovering above the sweet-smelling old-fashioned flowers—the old man, the London pride, the columbine — which fringe the greensward at my feet.

This is not my home; but I am so often here—whenever, in fact, my grandfather can spare me—that many people believe Mrs. Cosgrove to be my mother.

She died when I was born, the news of my father's death killing her; and Mrs. Cosgrove, who had been her friend, became indeed a second mother to me, and so brought me home to Stuart Park.

The gallant Colonel, her husband, fell at Delhi, and before the Mutiny was stamped out, two of her three children died. With the eldest she settled in the little black and white cottage at Ludford, within a dozen miles of the park. And between these two homes have I passed my life.

This still summer afternoon, though my fingers are knitting and my eyes gazing across at the town lying so hot and quiet, my ears are listening for Ainslie Cosgrove's step upon the gravel. He is with us on leave, and to-day is fishing at Steventon.

The gate clicks. I go on with my knitting and affect not to hear it; but out of the corners of my eyes I see his tall slight figure moving across the lawn, with the loose slinging step which makes so little of distance.

He is wearing his gray suit and soft hat. I learn to know all the clothes in his wardrobe when I am at Ludford; but I like best to see him in these—the rough gray goes so well with Ainslie's frank smile and sunburnt face.

I don't know why, but he has not seemed so nice this visit. And yet I have enjoyed it. I am afraid that, favorite as he must be, the men of his regiment spoil him.

He evidently does not care to be with us as much as of old; the walks in the dusk of the evening, when we would sit in some corner upon the hill, and tell one another our different ambitions, and build castles in the air far surpassing the gray walls that faced us, have vanished like our dreams.

I used too to go with him on his fishing expeditions; but now he goes alone. Since he has been out in the world, and been petted and welcomed everywhere, I suppose his ideas have widened, and I only bore him.

"Amber," he says, as he throws himself upon the grass near me, and plays with the reel of his rod, "I have a surprise for you. Whom do you think I have seen in the town? Some one who is coming here."

"I don't know, I am sure; some one nice, I hope," I say with a smile, going on with my work, though I am really thinking to myself, "What a graceful figure he has!"

"O, of course he's nice. It's your cousin James."

I try to look as if I thought him very nice, for is he not my cousin? And I think I succeed, for Ainslie, who is watching my face, kicks the turf savagely, and points to a man in a riding-dress and spurs, who is coming down the street. It is James.

"I expect he is coming to say my grandfather wants me."

Ainslie grumbles out something very like "Why doesn't Sir Martin do his own messages?" which is unreasonable, as my grandfather is nearly ninety; but I discreetly pretend not to hear, and we both have to get up and greet the newcomer.

James is not looking well, I notice, as soon as he enters the gate. His face is paler than is usual with him, and he looks careworn and haggard, much as if my steady cousin had been keeping late hours, and keeping them unprofitably.

But he readily accepts the invitation to stay to dinner, which Ainslie gives him as earnestly—hospitable as he is—as if his company at that meal were the one thing he desired. And James's usual courtesy and suavity, which sometimes make me feel so clumsy and hoydenish, do not fail him.

Picture to yourself a man below the middle height, pale and light-haired, with a fair drooping moustache which hides his mouth, and small white hands always on the move; a good-humored man withal, a man of endless conversation — not only endless, but of rare power to charm, one who will amuse you in spite of yourself; and so you have my cousin James Stuart M'Michael as he sits upon the little lawn at Ludford.

I ask him how my grandfather is, and for a moment, as he quickly turns from me and caresses his moustache, I fear that he has come with bad news. But it is not so.

He assures me that Sir Martin is tolerably well, and does not expect me before the end of the week. And then we talk about indifferent things until my mother comes out to us and greets James warmly. He is somewhat of a favorite with her.

Although the day is fine, the river is full for the time of year, running past the garden with a strong stream towards the weir a hundred yards below.

A group of children on the other side, whose laughter floats pleasantly over, are playing in a retriever after sticks. Near them a wall bounds the stream, but they are standing where an opening, made for watering horses breaks the line of the little embankment.

Lazily I watch the dog enjoying the sport as much as any one, until the biggest of the children throws one farther from the bank than before. Neptune springs in merrily, and swims quickly towards the morsel, which, on our side of the river, is invisible.

Has it sunk? No, the current has caught it, and the dog, following it boldly, is carried down full forty yards before he seizes it. He turns and breasts the stream, but, tired by his previous exertions, soon makes for the bank. The sheer wall, rising six feet from the water, gives him no chance of landing.

Again and again he tries, and, each time failing, falls heavily back under water. Then the poor fellow loses his presence of mind, and, instead of steadily swimming back to the opening in the wall, he paddles to and fro, trying to clamber up, and wasting all his strength in these useless efforts.

Even at this distance I can fancy his big patient eyes looking up piteously, and I jump up, but without an idea what to do.

"O Ainslie, he will be drowned!"

"Yes, Amber, I think that dog has had his day," says my cousin, without rising. O, if he could know how I hate him! Audibly, I'm afraid, I mutter "Brute!" and I turn to Ainslie, who is leaning with one hand on the grass and the other shading his eyes, which are fixed upon the struggle.

"I'm afraid there is nothing else for it," says he quickly; and I hear the gate clash to behind him, and I see his tall straight figure speeding over the bridge. And we can only stand there and look on.

I cannot see how the dog is faring. I have only eyes for Ainslie coming to the rescue. He reaches the spot, flings off his coat and shoes, and plunges in. A moment's struggle, and, with one hand on the dog's collar, he is swimming slowly towards the opening in the wall.

Very slowly it seems to two of us; but his touch gives new courage to the dog, the steady strokes conquer, and both are helped out by the dozen hands ready to receive them and to attend to the poor dog.

I have no thought of him now; I can only watch the drenched figure that so quickly tears itself from the cheering crowd, and comes running back, looking a little ashamed of his enthusiasm, as I have noticed men will look when they have done anything to be proud of.

I do not wait for him, but have fled into the house. And I am proud, O, so proud of him, that I cry a little bit, and have to wash my face before I go down-stairs; and if I come down a woman, and wiser, with a knowledge of myself and of others gained from those tears which I had not possessed before, that knowledge is very far from making me sadder.

But it does in some way make me more shy; I think myself clumsy and awkward and ill at ease; and it is not my cousin's superabundance of blandness which makes me so now.

Yet, through my own reserve and consciousness, I gain a glorious glimpse, that makes me sing as later I go up to bed, into the feelings that may lie behind those signs in another.

It was unlucky that the episode of the dog which I have set down at length should have occurred on that particular day. This is an after-thought, for at the time I had no idea of concealing my feelings towards James, or the opinion of him which this unlucky incident had led me to form.

As things were to be, it was unlucky, for it made me reject the suit, which it appeared he came to proffer, in a way I should not otherwise have adopted.

It was in the garden that he spoke; after dinner, when the lights in the town were beginning to sparkle in the dusk.

He spoke well—James never failed to do that—but the earnestness was not all feigned—my woman's vanity, angry as I was, forbade me to believe that; and now I have better means of knowing what mind lay behind that pale face and those shifting hands, that seemed, in the moment of pleading, to have cast aside disguise.

"No, James, it cannot be!" I said at last, tired of his protestations. "My answer would have been just the same yesterday; but I could never like in that way a man who could let a dog die with a cynical sneer."

"You will think better of this, Amber," he said, with a pale smile.

"I shall never think better of you," I answered savagely, crushing down the pity I felt for his disappointment by working myself into a rage.

He had pressed me sore before we parted thus; yet when, on leaving, he offered me his hand, he smiled so blandly that I could fancy it a dream. And seeing him smile so, and Ainslie crossing the bridge with his hand on the horse's neck, I was somehow uneasy without rhyme or reason.

* * * * * *

We were at breakfast the morning after James's visit, when Ainslie, who had had his and gone into the town to the little reading-room, entered hastily with news in his face.

"Amber, I have heard in the town that Sir Martin is ill. I came in to tell you at once; but there can be no reason for alarm, or we should have been the first to hear it."

"Grandpapa ill! How can that be? James said he was as well as usual."

"Sir Martin must have been taken ill after James left the park. Still, I wonder that he has not telegraphed to you. There is a train at eleven which reaches the station by a quarter to twelve. I could drive you almost as soon, if I could get a decent nag from the Angel."

But, slow as was the little cross-country line, I preferred to trust to it. Needless to say, I was in great distress at the news.

My grandfather, cold and unsympathetic as he was, was yet the only relation I had in the world except James, his younger son's child.

Sir Martin, people said, had never recovered from his grief at the death of both his sons in the same year—my father in India, and his brother of typhus fever at the park. But he had always been kind to me in his stern way. Though I had long known that he cherished the wish that I should become James's wife, he had never clearly mentioned it to me.

"Would you rather sit somewhere else?"

Ainslie asked, as he opened the door of a car in which a middle-aged man, much wrapped up, was already ensconced. I had no maid with me, the dear little cottage at Ludford hardly sufficing for one visitor.

"O dear, no!" I said, making myself comfortable. "I will let you know how Sir Martin is." And before I could say more we were moving away from the platform. My thoughts, as I tried to catch a last glimpse of him, were hardly cheerful; but they were speedily interrupted by my companion speaking.

"Pray excuse me," he said suddenly; "may I ask if you were speaking of Sir Martin M'Michael of Stuart Park?"

I took a good look at him before answering; but though it was August, he was so closely wrapped up that I could not see much.

By his brown complexion I should have judged him to be a foreigner; his moustache was quite white, but his face, where I could see it, was unwrinkled—he might be fifty. His eyes were keen enough, and his voice undoubtedly that of a gentleman. Reassured by my survey, I answered,

"Yes, he has been taken ill suddenly. Do you know him?"

"I did once," he answered, with a restless movement. "Are you going to Stuart Park?"

I bowed, and looked out of my window, conscious that he was scrutinizing me earnestly. He said nothing more, and, after creeping through innumerable small stations, we reached Stuart Town.

I had announced my coming by telegram; but there was no carriage to meet me, an omission—for it was two miles to the Park—which filled me with fear. My grandfather must be very ill. Declining the station-master's offer of assistance, I set out to walk the distance.

Before I reached the house, when its great stacks of chimneys and old Tudor gables were just appearing among the trees, I met James coming hastily to meet me. He seemed nervous and perturbed, but his first words explained this.

"Sir Martin is worse, Amber—very ill, I fear. He was attacked while I was away yesterday. I hastened to meet you, that none of the servants might see you and tell him that you were come, without preparation."

"That was good of you, James. I am glad that I came at once."

"Yes; did you come in by the lodge-gate or the little bridle-path?"

"By the bridle-path. Are you going in this way?" He had turned off into a path which led to a side-door in the right wing.

"Yes; the doctor says his nerves are preternaturally acute, and the slightest shock or noise must be avoided."

He told me other details as we passed, without seeing any one, to my rooms on the first floor in the right wing.

Save my maid's, all the other rooms in this wing were guest-chambers. It was lonely, but I preferred it; for from the windows a beautiful view of the Stretton Hills could be enjoyed, particularly in winter, when the shrubbery outside was leafless.

My bedroom was inside the sitting-room. At the door of the latter a strange woman met us.

"Watkyns, you know, is away," said my cousin. "She has not been sent for yet."

I knew of this, though I had momentarily forgotten it. I passed into my bedroom to take off my things without the slightest suspicion.

When I came back into the sitting-room, the maid—a tall stupid-looking woman, much older than Watkyns—was standing by the window. On the table was a tray with luncheon. But I had no appetite, and I went at once to the door. It was locked.

"There is something the matter with the door," I said, after fumbling at it for a moment.

The woman by the window did not turn or make any reply.

"Do you hear?" I cried, irritated by her silence. "There is something the matter. Open the door, please."

She turned, and, sullen as was her face, she looked ill at ease with what she had to say.

"You cannot get out, miss. It's as well to understand it at once. The door's locked on the outside; and, until he who has the key comes back, here you must stay."

"Are you mad?" I cried, trying to crush down my fears. "Give me the key at once, and don't talk nonsense!"

"I haven't got it," she said apathetically. "It is no good being angry with me. I am as much a prisoner as you are."

"Good Heavens!" I cried; "do you know that I am mistress here? My grandfather is ill, and I must go to him. Open this door at once; or, if it is fastened, ring the bell."

She made no answer, but nodded grimly at the place where the bell-rope should have been. It was gone, and even the wire was broken.

Then, when I perceived that it was an arranged scheme, a sudden feeling of helplessness came over me. I remembered that a green baize door shut in the little suite of rooms, and would effectually prevent any alarm reaching the other parts of the house.

The windows were securely fastened; but even if I broke one, and shouted with all the strength of my lungs, the noise would hardly pierce the shrubberies.

And yet, while I felt myself growing paler, it seemed so ridiculous that I, the mistress, should be imprisoned in my own rooms! What could be the motive? Except the station-master, I had not seen any one who would be likely to mention my arrival. Was that why James asked me if I had passed the lodge?

Was my grandfather really ill? Yes, of that, as the report came from Ainslie, there could be no doubt. This must be my cousin's doing, out of revenge for my refusal of his suit. Improbable, almost absurd, as it seemed, that must be the case, though I could not guess his ultimate intention.

I must have my wits about me. I ate my lunch, the woman waiting upon me respectfully enough. How wearily passed the hours until it grew dusk! and then a step sounded in the passage, a key was put in the lock, and James entered and locked the door behind him. He made a sign to the woman, and she retired into the bedroom, and closed the door.

"We won't beat about the bush, Amber. You have discovered by this time that you are my prisoner. No one knows that you are here, and, until I say the word, no one will know. The household is in confusion, owing to Sir Martin's illness."

"He is ill! O James, how can you keep me here?"

"I will tell you in a few words. Sir Martin, who cannot live three days, the doctors say, made his will yesterday. He believes, Amber, that you will marry me. I have told him so. Will you let it be? and I will take you to him this moment."

He drew nearer.

"And if I do not—what then?"

"Then you will not see him. He has made his will in that belief, and has left all to go to me with the title, feeling sure that I shall do what is right by you. If he dies, or rather when he dies, you will be penniless. I am playing both for love and fortune, Amber. If you will not marry me, at least you shall take no fortune to your husband."

He said much to the same effect, but only excited more and more my indignation and anger. I refused to bind myself, refused with scorn; and he left me, after telling me how futile was all hope that I should be released unless I would promise to do as he wished.

He avowed that he had planned to keep me at Ludford in ignorance of Sir Martin's illness, satisfying the old man with lying excuses for my absence. But the news oozed out, as we know, and then my telegram announced that he was defeated—that I was coming. In his perplexity he hit upon the desperate scheme of shutting me up in my own rooms; and with this success.

All this he told me. So wild did it render me that I tried to take the key from him by main force when he rose to go. The woman pulled me back, and, sobbing bitterly with rage and grief, I flung myself upon my bed.

Slowly the weary hours of that night wore away. Now I would leap restlessly up, and try the door; now I would strive to move the woman, persuade, bribe, frighten her; but all in vain. Now I would moan as I conjured up the picture of my dying grandfather, only a few rooms away, calling upon my name, it was a frightful night indeed.

Early in the morning James came again; but this time he stayed merely to ask if my resolution held out; and finding that I loathed him, he went sullenly away again. He was haggard and perplexed; could my grandfather have taken a turn for the better?

My heart leaped high with hope, and then sank: would Sir Martin be safe in my unscrupulous cousin's hands? And this added another terror to my position. Through the baize door came no sound of life.

At dusk he paid us a third visit. It was fruitless, though he told me that Sir Martin was worse; and, more dark-eyed and haggard than ever, went away again. This time I made up my mind that I would escape. My passion had worn itself out by this time, and fear had taken its place.

In the dark I sat and watched my passive keeper, and turned from her to glance round the room for the means of escape. I could, perhaps, let myself down from the window if I could get rid of her. If! Ah, that if! The riddle was to be solved in a different way.

About nine o'clock I heard the swing-door fall to with a bang quite unlike the stealthy way in which my cousin came and went; then hurried footsteps along the passage; and then the noise of some one searching for the door-handle in the dark.

I sprang up, wild with excitement—perhaps it was with fear. My immovable companion even looked alarmed. We stared into one another's eyes.

"Amber! Miss M'Michael, are you there?"

O joy, it was Ainslie's voice! My heart leaped high with the sudden revulsion. How the fear and dread that were overwhelming me passed away at the sound!

He knew our situation; for without losing time he warned me to stand back from the door, and, throwing himself against it, at the second attempt burst it in. In a moment he was inside, and his arm round me.

"Take me to him, Ainslie; take me to him!" I cried.

He knew to whom I meant, yet he paused as we were leaving the room, and looked into my face.

"Are you prepared for a great shock, dear? Will you be very brave? It is good news, my darling; better than you can imagine. There is some one with Sir Martin who has at present a better right to you even than I have."

I nodded anxiously, not comprehending what he was saying, but only eager to be by my grandfather's side. We hastened through several passages, all deserted, and indicating the confusion into which the house was thrown.

In the corridor outside Sir Martin's room all the servants were collected. They made way for us, but seemed in no degree surprised at our sudden appearance together. Ainslie opened the door, and led me softly in.

The old man's sight was failing, and to suit it the spacious dark-panelled room was lit with numerous candles, which yet failed to dispel the gloom.

My grandfather was greatly changed. His face was wan and drawn; but the shadow of death seemed to be held at bay by the painful look of anxiety and doubt that possessed his features. There was some one standing by his bedside, away from us, whom I took to be the nurse.

At the foot of the bed was my treacherous cousin, in an attitude, as we entered, of indignant denial. He did not see us, or the servants, who, over our shoulders, peeped in with looks of scared wonder. As we entered, he took a step nearer to the bed, as if to separate the other two.

"I have told you, sir, my cousin has promised to marry me. In a few hours she will be here, and will tell you so, sir. Let the will wait until then. Can you not trust me, grandfather?"

"Yes, yes," said the old man, with difficulty; "but let me see her. Why isn't Amber here?"

"She is at Ludford, Sir Martin. She has been sent for, and in a few hours will be here," answered James, pretending to look at his watch.

"You lie, James M'Michael! She is not at Ludford. She is here, in your power!"

The speaker advanced out of the shadow of the curtain; at the same time that James sprang back with astonishment, as much at the voice, so wonderfully resembling Sir Martin's, as at the sudden attack.

"Who are you?" he cried.

"Your uncle, your uncle, come back from the grave to confound your villainy. Where is my daughter?"

It was the stranger whom I had met in the railway-car. Only as one in a dream had I gathered the meaning of what was said.

I felt Ainslie push me forward, I heard a rising murmur of surprise among the servants; I saw James's blanched and beaten face, and my grandfather's eyes turned painfully towards me. The room seemed to turn round, and as my father clasped me in his arms I fainted.

Left for dead by the mutineers, my father had been found still breathing, by an old servant, who concealed him in a little low-caste village of the Rajpoot country.

There, it is as wonderful as true, he regained his health of body; but his memory was gone. For seventeen years he lived, harmless indeed, and venerated by the Hindoos of the village as a sacred person, and jealously guarded and supported by them as the source of their prosperity.

At the end of those long dark years, an army doctor fell in with him, became interested in what he heard from the villagers about him, and by an operation restored him truly as from death to life.

The seventeen years were a blank; but all that went before, down to the fight at Kolapore, was as the events of yesterday.

He made himself known, and was recognized by many at Bombay; funds and every assistance were supplied, that he might regain his position. You know how opportunely he returned.

My grandfather died a few days later, with my hand in his, and his head on his son's shoulder. Of course, his will was altered; but James, though left dependent upon my father's generosity, has had no cause to complain. We have never seen him since.

It was Ainslie, who, driving over to make inquiries, fell in with my father, as he was trying to ascertain how things were at the park. They compared notes, and, knowing that I had arrived at the station, guessed pretty nearly the truth of the matter.

A few months later, Ainslie and I were married; and if my life before was a happy one, what shall I say of it now that I have gained both a father and a husband, whose only object seems to be to give me fresh cause for gratitude?

I have two homes now, Ludford and the Park, and really it would be hard to say at which I am most happy. So I will not try.

THE CARE OF THE EYES.—A copy of the following rules used to be given by a distinguished teacher in New York to each of her pupils:

Things I must remember about my eyes.

1. Not to read or work at all by twilight or any dim light.

2. Not to read or work in the evening by a flickering gaslight, but by a perfectly steady flame.

3. Not to sit facing the light either in the day or evening; but to sit so that the light shall fall over my left shoulder on my book or work, and never on my eyes.

4. Not to bend down over my book or work, but to hold it up to my eyes, and not my eyes down to it.

5. Not to read or work immediately on rising in the morning or before breakfast.

6. Never to do fine drawing or fine fancy work in the evening.

7. Not to be careless of my health; because whatever hurts my general health and strength weakens my eyes. Therefore I must, first, sleep enough; second, eat proper food at proper times; third, wear warm clothing and thick shoes; fourth, take a good walk in the fresh air every day.

The Widow's Table.

BY L. C.

I SUPPOSE we shall have to call upon her, Charlie?"

Charlie Brynton, who was sitting opposite to his father, his legs stretched out to the fire, and an air he had been trying on his violin still running in his head, looked round with such a bewildered expression that his mother laid down her knitting to nudge him with her elbow, and Mr. Brynton senior exclaimed, testily:

"What a thing it is to be music-mad! I don't believe you've heard a word I have been saying to you!"

"Don't call me so dense as that!" was the good-humored reply. "I'm sure, sir, I listened with all due respect——"

"Not a bit of it!" growled his father, ruthlessly interrupting the protest. "Any other young fellow would have been thoroughly upset at hearing of the death of his godfather——"

"And so I was; no one could be more sincerely grieved to hear that Mr. Carey had died suddenly; but as I had not seen him since he went to Hong Kong seven years ago, and his decease was notified to us some months since——"

"I wish you wouldn't break in so rudely upon what I am saying!" Mr. Brynton exclaimed, more irritably than before. "Of course, I was not alluding to the mere fact of poor Carey's death, though it was a misfortune to many, for he was a very estimable man. What I was thinking of was the difference to your prospects his marriage has caused. He had always promised to leave you his savings, and they must have amounted to a good round sum; and now we learn that a few weeks before he was taken off so suddenly he married, and left everything to his widow—yes, everything—and you receive the tidings as stolidly as if you were a rich man, and it made no difference to you."

Charlie Brynton shrugged his shoulders.

"If I had abused our defunct friend in the choicest of language, what good would it have done me?"

"Don't talk so flippantly, there's a dear boy!" murmured Mrs. Brynton, as her husband turned his back on both of them with an impatient "Pshaw!" "You know it is a dreadful disappointment to poor pa; he has always counted on seeing you independent; and now that business is dull, and his health is failing, it worries him sadly."

"Indeed I am very sorry!" the young man responded, in graver tones, "sorry for myself as well as for the downfall of your hopes; but fretting will not alter the state of affairs. Mr. Carey is dead, and I must be content to work as my father did before me!"

"And bury your talents in the office of a merchant, I suppose, as I have done," Mr. Brynton retorted. "I thought you had more ambition."

Charlie sighed. He had been wont to indulge in hopes and aspirations of which it would now be folly to speak; but he quickly threw off all temptation to be discontented, and answered his father's fretful speech as cheerfully as he could.

"If I can earn as excellent a character for integrity and perseverance as you have always had, sir, why should I complain? Mr. Carey was not *bound* to leave me his property."

"He had always assured me that he intended to do so. He has behaved——"

But his son's deprecating gesture made the irritated man pause.

"I suppose you are right," he observed, more quietly. "It is useless dwelling on one's misfortunes, and, as I said before, I suppose we must be civil to the widow. She has written to acquaint us with her arrival in England——"

"And a very prettily-written, nicely-worded note it is!" interjected Mrs. Brynton.

"Yes, yes! she is crafty enough to know that she may be very glad of my good offices in settling poor Carey's affairs!" Mr. Brynton retorted, his anger rising again. "Anyhow, she expresses a hope that such old and valued friends of her late husband will not desert her now she is left quite alone; and," he added, gloomily, "we shall have to be civil, or all the world will declare that we are sulking because she has ousted you out of your long-promised inheritance!"

"Oh, yes! let us be civil to her, by all means!" counselled Charlie, who was getting sick of the subject.

"That's just what your mother keeps saying; but as I cannot go myself, nor spare her, it is you who must call on Mrs. Carey!"

"Me?"

"Yes, sir! Why not? She has taken a house at Barnes; you can get there in half an hour, so don't worry me with objections."

"On the contrary, I'll go to-morrow morning if I can get leave of absence, and then the widow Carey will be off my mind. But don't send me away without my instructions. Am I to invite her to visit you, sir, or merely make her some polite offers of service in your name, and in a general way?"

"How do I know," growled Mr. Brynton, "who haven't an idea what sort of a person she is? Can I tell you whether you'll find in her a silly, sentimental old woman, married for the third or fourth time, or a cunning, antiquated individual, eager to secure herself a name and a dower? Go and see her, and if you can make my illness sufficient excuse don't ask her to come near me at all."

"Poor papa doesn't really wish you to be

rude to Mr. Carey's widow," whispered Mrs. Brynton to her son. "When he is not in so much pain he will agree with us that no blame attaches to her; and if she is a homely, kind-hearted, elderly woman, as the tone of her letter leads me to think, there can be no doubt that Mr. Carey acted very sensibly in marrying her."

"And leaving his godson nothing?" laughed Charlie. "No, don't trouble yourself to explain. I know precisely what you mean, and I'll behave to the widow just as you would have me."

With this promise or his mind he rapped at the door of the very pretty villa on Barnes Common, from which Mrs. Carey's note was addressed.

His summons was answered by a respectable elderly female, who, however, hesitated, and eyed him dubiously before replying to his inquiry for her mistress.

"She did not know whether Mrs. Carey was disengaged," she said, ungraciously. "She didn't think it was any use his waiting, but if he wished to do so he could step inside."

As she spoke she opened the door of a bright little breakfast parlor, then started back, visibly disconcerted.

"Oh, Miss Sidney, I didn't know you were here!"

She would have closed the door again, but Charlie Brynton stepped past her into the room, too much displeased at what he considered the impertinence of her manner to take any notice of the hand she extended to detain him.

This woman was evidently the widow's maid, and presumed on her mistress's favor; but coming as he did, simply to represent his father, he would not submit to cavalier treatment from anyone.

It was, therefore, with raised color and head thrown back that the young man entered the apartment, which was already occupied by a girl, who was bending over a work table that stood in the bay-window.

She was searching for something in one of the trays, and had been too much absorbed in her occupation to hear the voices in the hall. Startled by the opening of the door, she turned round so hastily that in the incautious movement her hand struck the table and knocked it over.

In an instant reels of cotton were rolling over the carpet in all directions, papers of needles and pins yielding up their contents, and skeins of floselle and macramé thread becoming mixed in almost inextricable confusion.

Miss Sidney, a merry-looking little brunette, with features too irregular to be called beautiful, yet endowed with a witchery that rendered her smiles irresistible, tried to appear grave as she bowed to the visitor; but the mutinous dimples around her mouth betrayed her amusement at the dilemma in which she found herself.

She could not retreat, for in velvet slippers it was not easy to walk across a carpet bristling with pins and buttons; nor did she care to risk falling over one or other of the spools and reels lying about; yet to stand there, conscious that Charlie Brynton's gaze, though respectful, was an admiring one, was equally embarrassing.

"I cannot think how I could be so awkward!" she murmured, glancing helplessly at the surrounding debris.

"Was the fault mine?" the young man demanded, as he came forward to tender his assistance, "or may I lay it on the shoulders of the grim female who bade me come in here as discourteously as if I were a dun or an impostor!"

"Jones's manner is not pleasant," Miss Sidney admitted, apologetically; "but she is such a faithful creature that those who know her weigh her virtues against her bad qualities, and put up with her. Moreover, she has been warned that London teems with persons of the description you mentioned."

"And she thought I answered the description?" queried Charlie, slily.

"Oh, no, she could not think that!" Miss Sidney responded, with such flattering eagerness that he was emboldened to offer his assistance in picking up the work-table and its contents.

"It is a pretty toy," he observed, as he examined the former, a fragile, graceful specimen of Indian workmanship in bamboo and mother-o'-pearl.

"A toy do you call it?" said the young lady. "I think it deserves a better name. Our sex owe to their needles the power of being useful to their friends and families, and many an hour that might otherwise have been frittered away in idleness is passed pleasantly at the work-table."

"I rescind my slanderous speech," he answered, with a smile, "and acknowledge that I never think my own good mother looks nicer than when she sits in the twilight knitting for the children of an orphan school in which she is interested."

Miss Sidney's bright eyes were suddenly suffused with tears.

"Ah! then you have a mother? I wish —"

She did not finish her sentence, but turned aside to collect some needles. Yet she must have been conscious that her companion had seen those tears, for the next moment she was hurriedly apologising for them.

"It's very absurd to me, especially as I am old enough to know better; but I never can hear anyone speak affectionately of their relatives without being reminded that I haven't any myself."

Somehow, one of her very small, plump hands got into Charlie Brynton's just then, and was pressed sympathetically.

Poor, lonely girl! Was she suffering the common fate of penniless orphans who have no other home than that they earn by submitting to the whims of some richer and often unfeeling woman?

"I hope Mrs. Carey is kind to you?" he could not resist saying.

But Miss Sidney was winding and withdrawing her hand; he had forgotten the needles when he clasped it, and their points were being forced into her tender skin.

He looked so horror-stricken on seeing her apply her handkerchief to it, that the young lady laughed her merriest; but she could not refuse to seat herself in the chair he insisted on placing for her, while he gathered up the rest of her scattered implements.

There was more laughter over his masculine awkwardness, as he replaced them in their several compartments, or made the wildest of guesses as to the uses to which some of them were applied; but Miss Sidney blushed too when he held up half a dozen violin strings that had fallen out of a small wooden box, and inquired what they did beside her thimble and scissors.

"But I beg your pardon!" for he had just perceived that the letter C was fancifully engraved on a silver plate let into the top of the table, "perhaps these are not your property after all."

"The work-table was one of Mr. Carey's presents to his bride," Miss Sidney explained. "He was very generous to her!"

"Yes?" said Charlie, so coldly that she regarded him doubtfully.

"I hope you have not prejudiced yourself against Mrs. Carey. Why should you?"

"Why indeed?" he replied. "It would not be fair to do so; at the same time you must bear in mind that she is a stranger to Mr. Carey's English friends, and that it is only out of respect for his memory that we are interested in his widow."

"You are cruelly frank!" said Miss Sidney. "Mr. Carey assured her—but it is a distasteful subject," she added, abruptly; "we will let it rest. As for those strings, they are mine. It is a bold avowal to make for I daresay you are one of the many who think women have no right to attempt an instrument that your sex have for so many years considered exclusively their own."

"I assure you I am not so illiberal," she was warmly told. "There is nothing I enjoy more than listening to Madame Norman Neruda. Have you heard her?"

"I have never heard but one good professional player," she replied, sadly, "and he was the old man who taught me the little I know. All my life has been spent amongst the hills above Hong Kong, where I had no amusements but sedentary ones—no society but the fretful, elderly lady with whom I resided."

"Mrs. Carey? Ah! you must come with her to see my mother; she is one of the kindest of creatures, and will endure with the widow so patiently that you will wonder at her till you see that it is for your sake. You shall not have such a melancholy life in England as you had at Hong Kong."

"Methinks you promise too much!" he was told, with a look half grateful, half demure. "It is evident that you do not know what sort of a person Mrs. Carey is!"

"Heaven forbid that she should prove as grim and distrustful as her maid! My mother hopes to find her kind-hearted and homely; in fact, just such another good old soul as herself. Will she be disappointed?"

"Mrs. Carey is—but I had rather not discuss her. May I show you my violin? I am told that it is an excellent one."

It was a Stradivarius, such as few amateurs possess, and Charlie Brynton was enraptured at the richness and mellowness of its tone.

He begged Miss Sidney to play to him; and though as an artist she was far inferior to himself, the picture she presented as she sat with the instrument tucked under her soft, round chin, and her brown eyes dreamy with delight in the melodies her taper fingers were evoking, was such a charming one, that he sat gazing at her in a trance of enjoyment.

Miss Sidney deserted this at last, and, with burning cheeks, laid down her bow, and rose from her chair.

"I grow selfish at such moments as these. I forget everything but my music."

And Charlie had forgotten that he came here to be civil to Mrs. Carey, not to linger beside her companion. But it was not his fault that the widow delayed her appearance: neither could anyone blame him if he tried to detain Miss Sidney by plunging into an account of the last of the classical concerts.

To this she listened with such vivid interest, and it was so pleasant to compare notes as to those works of the old composers both knew and appreciated, that another half hour slipped away unnoticed.

But Mrs. Jones was not equally oblivious of the lapse of time, for now a sharp tap from her knuckles was followed directly by her entrance.

"Lunch has been ready for these twenty minutes," she said, with an aggrieved air, "and the carriage that was ordered for two o'clock will be here before you have been able to swallow a mouthful."

The woman vanished as suddenly as she had appeared, and the disconcerted Charlie Brynton snatched up his hat.

"Apparently Mrs. Carey does not intend to receive me; or else this maid of hers has not informed her of my arrival. May I trouble you, Miss Sidney, to be my ambassadress, and to explain that illness prevents my father from answering her note personally. By the way, I ought to have mentioned that my name is Brynton."

"It was unnecessary," replied the young lady, smiling and blushing. "I recognized you as soon as you came into the room. The photograph Mr. Carey had of his godson was an excellent likeness."

"Then I may hope that you look upon me as an acquaintance; and instead of saying good-bye, it may be au revoir."

Miss Sidney looked down shyly, and faltered that she did not know.

"Au revoir!" Charlie repeated, as he pressed her hand. "How lucky for me that Mrs. Carey has not shown up! I shall call again to-morrow, unless you forbid it."

The young lady did not forbid it, and the widow's visitor went back to town in the best of spirits, till he remembered that a disinherited man must not commit such a folly as falling in love with a penniless orphan.

In spite of many prudent resolutions, there came before his eyes continually so exquisite a vision of a female face that he counted the moments till he could repeat his call on Mrs. Carey. But if he expected to be indulged in another interview with Miss Sidney he was disappointed. Mrs. Jones, through the half-opened door, flung a message at his head, and shut him out as soon as she had delivered it.

"Missus's compliments to Mrs. Brynton, and hopes to do herself the pleasure of calling upon her some time to-day."

What hour did that mean? and would Miss Sidney accompany her? So eager was our prudent youth to learn this that he pleaded a headache at the office, and found his way to his father's early in the afternoon.

Having ascertained that his mother was in the drawing-room, he hastened thither, resolved to make her his confidante. But she was not alone. A small, youthful figure, garbed in the crape and cashmere of a widow, was sitting at Mrs. Brynton's feet, and both ladies were too much engrossed, one in speaking, the other in listening, to detect his approach.

"Not for worlds would I have Mr. Carey's noble, generous conduct misunderstood!" were the first words Charlie heard. "The death of my aunt left me alone in the little world of Hong Kong; and it was so well known that she had left me richly dowered, that I was marked out as the prey of the greatest scoundrel in the community. Knowing himself to be in a hopeless condition, and that when he was no more I should be without a protector, Mr. Carey—he had been my aunt's oldest and best friend—begged me to lay aside all scruples and become his wife. I did so, and had the mournful happiness of soothing his last moments. As soon as he had been laid in the earth I obeyed his dying injunction and left Hong Kong for Australia, where I spent the first months of my widowhood; but you cannot have received the letter I sent you from there."

"We had no other letter than the few lines informing us of Mr. Carey's death, and we inferred that he had died suddenly."

"Then you are still ignorant that he did not leave his property to me—why should he? I had enough and to spare—but to your son, for whom he had always intended it."

"I am so glad—so thankful!" Mrs. Brynton began. "But here is Charlie himself!"

"Why did you let me think you Mrs. Carey's companion, to call you Miss Sidney?" cried Charlie, getting possession of both the widow's hands, and trying to speak sternly.

"It was all Jones's doings," she answered, penitently. "The silly old thing always persists in calling me by my maiden name. Besides, I hesitated to disappoint your expectations. How could I pluck up courage to say to you, 'Alas! I am not elderly, and homely, and sensible, and yet I am the designing woman you have determined to dislike!'"

"Dislike!" Charlie echoed, so reproachfully that Mrs. Carey dropped her veil over her face and turned from him to his mother.

She did not choose to acknowledge just then that his godfather's praises of his excellent character and abilities had combined, which many stolen peeps at his portrait, to incline her heart to love, long before his manly presence and kindness to the widow's supposed dependant completed the conquest.

But she has since then confessed that he is dear to her, and at the close of the year of her mourning, a courtship will end in holy matrimony that commenced over a widow's work-table.

THE THIMBLE'S BIRTHDAY.—A curious bi-centenary—that of the invention of the thimble—has just been celebrated in Amsterdam. According to the Dutch, the inventor of the thimble was a goldsmith named Nicholas van Benschotan, who, in 1687, imagined the useful little article to preserve the dainty fingers of his lady love, Myntraw von Reneelder. But the French fix the invention of the thimble at an earlier date; an old French ballad, published in 1484, speaks of his fair one's lips as being "more pecked at by birds than is the thimble by the needle," which would prove that the thimble was known at least four hundred years ago. But it is difficult to imagine that the thimble could be otherwise than coeval with the needle, that is to say, with the age of sewing, which evidently has flourished since the very earliest times.

AN agreeable toilet-water can be made by taking a wineglassful of fresh lemon juice, rain-water one pint, otto of roses five drops. Mix, and keep well corked. Wipe the face with a soft towel dipped into this lotion. It is said to remove freckles, tan, and discoloration of the skin.

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

A fac-simile of a newspaper a century old was recently reprinted; and it fell into the hands of a couple who, seeing in it an advertisement for a man and his wife as a butler and housekeeper, applied for the situations, and were quite grieved to find they were a little too late.

A souvenir from Palestine, a memento of the land where all the events of the "wondrous story" of the foundation of our Christian faith took place, is surely a novelty in presentation, birthday, and seasonal cards. Yet such are issued in the form of veritable flowers, grasses, and mosses, that have lived and blossomed under the stars that shone over Bethlehem when the angels sung "Peace on earth and goodwill to men," artistically dried, pressed, and arranged upon the card with appropriate mottoes and verses.

Here is a suggestive advertisement from a London paper: "Female detectives wanted. Must be capable of moving in good society, and be proficient in French and music." Applications are to be sent to an "inquiry agent" or private detective. It may readily be imagined that the services of ladies "capable of moving in good society," with the additional charm of proficiency in French and music, though these are by no means uncommon in "good society," may be required in matters of delicate and difficult investigation.

According to a Liverpool paper, the lineal descendant of Dermont M'Morough, the last Irish king, is now working as a stonemason at buildings in Liverpool. The undoubted representative of the celebrated Earl of Ulster, who flourished in the time of Elizabeth, and who gave that monarch a good deal of trouble in Ireland, is a policeman in the Liverpool police force. And the grandson of one of the most prominent members of the Irish Parliament, who was not only distinguished as an orator and a beautiful lyric poet, but also for his patriotism and opposition to the Union, is now a barman in a public house in Liverpool.

A strange pair of fish were seen recently in Lake Ontario, at Oswego Harbor. Running itself near the top of the water, within an's length of a boat, was seen a pickerel of about two and a half feet in length. Lying close beside the pickerel was what at first appeared to be an eel, a little over a foot long. But as the pickerel swam slowly away, the companion was seen to be a lamprey, whose sucker head was fastened to the pickerel just back of his gills, and whose tail was waving alongside that of the pickerel as the latter dragged its burden along. The lamprey's habit is to sponge its living out of the rest of the fish world by attaching itself by suction to any fish that it can get in its power, permitting the continued life of its victim as long as possible while subsisting on its blood.

The morphiomania, which has for some time past reached alarming proportions in Berlin and Paris, is rapidly developing in London. Such at least is the opinion of many eminent doctors, and the opinion derives confirmation from the fact that in almost every West-end druggists' shop there are placed side by side cooperators, sparkling salts Lotions, toilet preparations, and nick-nacks, pocket cases containing the small syringes and the bottles used for the subcutaneous injection of morphia or morphine solutions. Five years ago the hypodermic syringes could only be obtained at the warehouses of chemical instrument makers. Moreover, the price has come down in a most remarkable manner. The necessary apparatus for injecting morphia, which once cost from half a guinea upwards, can now be purchased for about three shillings and sixpence complete.

While the business community and the working populations of the civilized world are said to be suffering from the depression of industries, it is yet undoubtedly true that luxurious living is becoming more marked than ever in certain favored circles. The stories told of the festivities in certain French and English fashionable houses, read like the descriptions one finds in novels or in the annals of the social life of Rome when the empire was in its splendor. At a festivity given at a chateau in France, a hidden orchestra discoursed most enchanting music, and with the dessert a troup of beautifully dressed girls appeared from behind the curtains and danced around the table offering fruit and flowers to the guests. At another house the shooting party was surprised on arriving at the lodge at which they were to lunch to find it converted into a banquet hall, where their hostess and her lady friends were on hand to attend to the sportsmen, elaborately costumed as waiting women. The orgies at some of these high-class entertainments are such as could not well be described in a family paper.

"IT'S a solemn thing, young man," said the broken-hearted father, "to come into the home of an old man and take away his only daughter, the light of the household, and the prop and solace of his declining years. But you have my blessing, and I wish you every joy, and——" "But I won't take her away, sir," interrupted the young man, inexpressibly affected. "We'll both stay with you."

Our Young Folks.

WHICH LOVED BEST?

"I love you, mother," said little John:
Then, forgetting his work, his cap went on,
And he was off to the garden swing,
And left her the water and the wood to bring.

"I love you, mother," said Rosy Nell;
"I love you better than tongue can tell."
Then she teased and pouted full half the day,
Till her mother rejoiced when she went to play.

"I love you, mother," said little Fan
"To-day I'll help you all I can;
How glad I am there's no school to-day!"
So she rocked the babe till asleep it lay.

Then, stepping softly, she fetched the broom
And swept the floor and tidied the room;
Busy and happy all day was she,
Helpful and happy as child could be.

"I love you, mother," again they said—
Three little children going to bed.
How do you think that mother guessed
Which of them really loved her best?

ON THE PRECIPICE.

A RUSSIAN STORY.

BUT, *tatka* (aunt), what am I to do when I can't make Olga and Daria understand English, and they laugh at me when I speak Russian?"

"When our dear cousin Edith teaches us those pretty English games we always understand her," said Olga, mischievously.

"But when she tells us we must not eat more cake, of course we can't understand her then," chimed in little Daria."

Edith's mother and father had lately died, leaving her in her uncle's charge. This uncle had married a Russian lady, and was living in the Caucasus.

They had two little girls, who, like most Russian children were very much spoilt. They had late dinners with their parents, got champagne to drink whenever they asked for it, and never went to bed until their eyelids were so heavy that they could no longer keep their eyes open.

"It is most unfortunate," said Edith's aunt, "that your uncle and I have to be away for a week just now, for *nyanya* (nurse) cannot take the children out until her sprained foot is better. And you are so young, Edith; but you must promise me faithfully on no account to walk by the cliff which overhangs the sea, for if either of the children went too near the edge and slipped, they would most certainly be drowned, or, at any rate, be dashed to pieces on the rocks."

Until now Edith had always liked going out in Russia, for there was so much to be seen. She liked to meet the priests of the Greek Church, dressed in their long black robes and tall hats, and she thought it very queer that they should wear their hair hanging down upon their shoulders like girls.

The peasant costume of Little Russia, now worn by young girls of the upper classes, especially delighted her. She greatly admired the blue silk coronet, the large beads around the neck, and the apron and bodice richly embroidered with crimson and blue silk, and longed to have a costume like it.

Poor Edith dreaded having the care of the children during their walks. She was old enough to feel deeply grateful to her uncle and aunt for giving her a home and for all their kindness, and the idea of either of the little girls coming to harm while with her was too horrible to think of.

She knew well that if she took them into the country, they would be climbing trees or sitting on the wet grass; and if she took them by the sea, they would be sure to choose the most dangerous rocks for their scrambles, or wade into the water, getting their feet and frocks wet through.

It was not at all unusual for them to get right into the sea with all their clothes on, and pretend to swim.

But, most fortunately, the week passed without any serious mishap to the children, and now there were only two hours left until their father and mother should arrive home.

"Do let's go to meet them, Edith," urged Olga.

"Oh, we must go!" cried Daria.

Edith hesitated. It certainly did seem most unnatural and unkind to refuse to take them to meet their parents; and yet in order to get to the main road, they would have to go by a path which led to the cliff walk overhanging the sea, against which her aunt had warned her. In fact, for about half a mile, the main road ran along the cliff itself.

"Papa and mamma will have had such a long drive from the station, which is ever so far away, and they are always so glad for us to meet them; *nyanya* always takes us to meet them," persisted Olga.

"Well, then, you must not want to go farther than the path which leads to the cliff. We must play about in those fields through which the main road passes."

"There's a dear, good, darling, Edith," cried both the children, hugging her violently.

When they first started they took Edith's hands, and walked by her side as demurely as the best behaved children could do. This continued for some time. At last Olga said, suddenly—

"Keep tight hold of my hand, Edith. I'm going to shut my eyes, and feel how it is to be blind."

"I'll do it too," cried Daria.

But this quiet pretence did not content the wild children very long. They soon let go Edith's hands, and bounded along by themselves.

"Oh, it's so queer!" shouted Olga. "I don't see a bit where I'm going."

"Nor I," cried Daria. "Not one bit."

Edith ran after them as fast as she could, and succeeded in catching hold of Daria, but Olga's light figure was still far ahead of them.

"Olga, stop! Open your eyes! You are getting near the cliff!" screamed Edith, at the top of her voice, first in Russian, and then in English.

But as Olga was excited, and was doing what she liked, she, of course, did not choose to understand either language, and ran on faster than ever.

Poor Edith was out of breath with shouting, and then she had to drag Daria after her, so that she could not keep up with Olga.

On, on rushed Olga, and Edith could hear her ringing laugh, and her voice shouting out—

"Oh, it is so fine. I don't know in the least where I am!"

With what terror did Edith see her little fairy figure running along the edge of the dangerous cliff! If she would only open her eyes in time to save herself from falling down that frightful precipice!

Now and then Edith's heart bounded with joy as the child unconsciously turned from the cliff, and then again she was chilled with horror when she saw her once more turning to the broken, overhanging edge, which might at any moment give way, and send her down amongst the dark rocks, slimy with wet sea-weed.

After the while Edith followed as fast as she could. They were now going down hill, so all ran a little faster.

Suddenly Olga uttered a shrill scream, and as that could be seen of her were her two little legs up in the air.

She was falling over the edge at last! Rushing up, Edith let go Daria's hand, and without a second's thought, leaped down after the child.

"Oh, Edith, dear—dear Edith; do, do forgive me!" were the first words which Olga uttered.

Edith, who had seen her fall head-foremost, was most thankful to hear her speak, for by that she knew that the child was at least conscious, and had not injured her brain. Olga did not move, and Edith was afraid to touch her, for fear she might have broken an arm or leg.

The height she had fallen was, after all, only about ten feet, for by this time they had reached the lowest part of the whole cliff, so that the accident could hardly have been fatal. Olga had on a straw hat, which, had, most fortunately, protected her head.

What was to be done now?

There was Olga below unable to move, and Daria crying above, and calling out between her sobs to know whether her little sister was dying.

Poor Edith had not time to think of her own state, but had she been told before that she could have jumped such a height, she would never have believed it.

"Edith, Edith!" shouted Daria from above: "I hear a carriage coming along. It is papa and mamma, I'm sure. Oh, what will they say to find Olga dying?"

Edith forgot all about her fear of her uncle's and aunt's anger in her delight at having help.

In a few minutes Olga's father had the little girl in his arms, and with the help of the man-servant succeeded in getting her up the cliff. Edith was then got up, and the whole party packed away into the carriage.

"It was every bit my own fault," sobbed out Olga. "I heard Edith calling to me all the time, but I did not want to open my eyes, for it was such fun to run with them shut."

As soon as they got home, Olga was put to bed. She was a good deal bruised and cut, and one of her wrists sprained, but no limb was broken.

She had, however, to keep in bed for some days, and had plenty of time to think how naughty she had been, and how unhappy her tiresome ways had made Edith, whom she really loved dearly.

"Do you know what mamma has brought you as a present?" asked she, when Edith was kissing her and saying "good-night." "It is one of those pretty peasant costumes you are so fond of."

E. P. R.

WHO WAS THE COWARD?

BY E. M. K.

MARBLES, marbles, marbles!—you think of nothing but marbles. You certainly cannot go out this afternoon, Frank, so for once you must give up your game."

"But, mother, I have promised to play with the boys, and Anna can mind the baby."

"No, Frank; Anna must attend to your father. I shall not be long, and you must stay in."

So saying, Mrs. Morrell left the room.

"By the time mother is back the boys will have finished their game," grumbled Frank.

The baby cried, but Frank took no notice; the baby screamed, Frank still remained wrapped up in his own thoughts; but Anna came in from the next room, and took the baby out of his cradle.

"Frank, why don't you look after baby?" she said.

"Anna, could you not get him sleep? I do so want to go out. If you will mind him for a quarter of an hour, I can keep my promise, and just play for a short time with the boys."

"But, Frank," said Anna, "father may want me; you know how ill he is, and mother said we were to stay in."

"So, of course, you are afraid to go out. I always thought you were a coward. Well, you can do as you please; I am off to play. I shall not be long."

Frank found that the boys had already begun their game.

"We cannot play the match this afternoon," said one of them, Gussie Turner by name, "there are so few of us here—only five, counting you, Frank."

"I keep my promises, you see," said Frank proudly.

"Well, at any rate, we can have a game," said another boy.

The game was begun, but somehow Frank did not enjoy it, and did not play nearly as well as usual. He kept on making misses and losing his marbles.

This made him very cross and ready to take offence; and when Gussie accidentally touched one of the marbles with his foot, Frank angrily accused him of cheating.

Gussie, of course, indignantly denied the charge, and the other boys took his part.

Frank, however, was so discontented that he was glad of an excuse for a quarrel, and angry words followed. Then, completely losing control over himself, Frank hit Gussie.

At first Gussie was too much astonished to say or do anything—he was very fond of Frank, and had never quarrelled with him before, so that he was quite determined that he would not fight him.

"Of course, you are too much of a coward to fight," said Frank.

"I certainly will not fight about such a silly little accident," said Gussie.

"It seems to me that some one else is a coward," said one of the boys. "Hit somebody your own size. Gussie is too small to fight you."

Frank stopped, then he turned on his heel and walked off sulkily home. There he found both his father and the baby asleep. Anna looked up as he came into the room, and made a sign to him to move about quietly.

Frank threw himself into a chair by the window, feeling very miserable. He saw now how cross he had been, and wished very much he could make it up with Gussie.

Just then the kettle on the fire began to boil over, and Anna got up to lift it off. It was very heavy, and she turned round and asked Frank to help her. He was so occupied in making good resolves that he did not attend to what his sister was saying, and she upset the boiling water over her hand.

The burn was a very bad one, but the brave little girl did not utter a sound. Frank saw what had happened, and, quickly forgetting his own troubles, ran to his sister's help.

"Anna," he whispered, "does it hurt very much? What shall we do?"

Anna made no answer; she was in too much pain to speak.

As soon as Mrs. Morrell came in she bound up Anna's hand, and, when the little girl was more comfortable, asked how the accident happened.

"Why, she was trying to lift the kettle, and upset the boiling water," said Frank. "She asked me to help her, but I was too cross. Just think, mother: she did not cry at all."

"How could I?" said Anna, quietly. "Father and baby were asleep, and I should have waked them."

Later on, just as Frank was going to bed, he came up to his mother, and said he wanted to tell her something. Then out came the whole story of his wrong-doing, from his calling Anna a coward to his fight about the marbles.

Mrs. Morrell said little, but as he was leaving whispered, "There has been a coward to-day, but it was not Anna. Do you know who it was, Frank?"

GRANDFATHER'S DOG.

BY HENRY FRITH.

THE doe and the fawn heard it, so did some birds that were out later than usual. But the people in the farmhouse did not hear the cry; for how should they when the wind was whistling round the house and drowning all other sounds?

The doe and fawn listened for a few moments, and then fled away into the depths of the forest. The birds also listened, and, after chirping for a while as if in answer, flew home to their nests, and the cry went on—

"Father! father!"

And the evening grew darker; and the wind carried away the voices of the two children who had been making their way along the snowy path, but who now found themselves in darkness, not knowing where to go. They held each other's hands tight, and the younger one said—

"Are we lost, Jessy?"

"I am afraid so. We must stand still and shout, and perhaps some one will hear us."

And the cry went on—

"Father! father!"

AT THE FARMHOUSE.

Ah, what a cheery place was the best kitchen at grandfather's farm. A great fire was blazing in the fireplace, and grandfather sat in the chimney corner resting after his long day's work. Grandfather's dog Tiger lay stretched on the hearth with his nose between his paws.

Grandmother was sitting opposite grandfather, and he was saying to her—

"Tut, tut, wife. I do wish you were not to let the children come to-day. I'll drive over to-morrow and fetch them."

Grandmother sighed and went on with her knitting, but occasionally stopped to listen to the wind.

Tiger, the dog, was listening too; evidently he did not like the wind, for he became uneasy, and pricked up first one ear, then the other, gave several plaintive whines, and finally walked to the door and scratched at it.

"Down, Tiger, down!" said the farmer.

But nothing would satisfy Tiger but that out he must go, so finally grandfather opened the door, and Tiger darted off.

TIGER.

When Tiger got outside he listened again. Tiger was disappointed; he could not hear the something that had warned his dog instinct that something was happening, and that he was wanted.

Again and again he listened, and in a sudden lull a feeble cry sounded out that caused Tiger to give a short sharp bark and to bound away.

Where was he going? Over the great field, and over the palings to a spot not far from where the doe and the fawn had been listening. The cry that had startled them still went on—

"Father! father!"

Suddenly there was a rustling and crunching of the low branches, and the quick breathing of some animal close by the two children. Ally gave a shriek.

"The wolves! the wolves!"

And, with a joyous bark, Tiger had rushed to them, and was licking their hands and faces.

Ally grasped her arms around the neck of the faithful dog.

"Tiger, where are we, Tiger?" she sobbed.

Wise little Jessy, down whose cheeks the tears were streaming, said—

"Tiger will show us the way. Home, Tiger, home!"

Inspirited by Tiger's arrival, little Ally rose up and held Tiger's collar.

Just at that moment the moon in one out and the clouds began to roll away, and Jessy gave a shout of joy.

"I know where we are now; not far from the palings."

Tiger wagged his tail, as much as to say—"You are quite right; we shall be at the farm in no time."

And so they were; and when grandfather heard Tiger barking and scratching at the door, he got up and opened it, and there, to his astonishment, stood Jessy and Ally, with Tiger bounding around them, looking as proud as possible.

"Wife, wife!" the farmer called out; "Tiger knew what he was about, though how he knew it is more than I can tell. But here they are—two half-frozen little maidens, and Tiger has brought them. Come in, children, come in."

BY THE FIRE.

Ally laid her head on grandmother's shoulder, and went fast to sleep. And Jessy felt as though she was beginning to nod as she sat upon grandfather's knee.

"How came you to be so late?" he asked them.

"We ought to have been early, grandfather," said Jessy; "but we stopped to look at things, and did not think of the time; then it began to snow and rain, and it grew dark, and we lost the path, and did not know where we were. And we shouted as loud as we could, because we hoped that some one would hear us."

"And you see some one did, though it was only a dog," said grandfather.

And grandfather called Tiger to him, and he patted him and shook his great paw saying—

"There never was such a dog."

And Tiger probably understood all that his master said, for he wagged his tail and stood up on his hind legs to lick his master's face.

Jessy patted him and said—

"You are as good as the little woodman's dog, Cæsar."

They slept well that night, and in their dreams they dreamed of the forest and of Tiger.

Tiger, too, was fast asleep, so were the doe and the fawn and the birds. The wind also was sleeping, the clouds had rolled away, and the moon was still shining over the snow.

TALE-BEARING.—Miss Hannah More, who died about fifty years ago, had a good way of managing tale-bearers. It is said that whenever she was told anything derogatory of another, her invariable reply was, "Come, we will go and ask if this be true." The effect was sometimes ludicrously painful. The tale-bearer was taken aback, stammered out a qualification, or begged that no notice might be taken of the statement. But the good lady was inexorable; off she took the scandal-monger to the scandalized, to make inquiry and compare accounts. It is not likely than anybody ever a second time ventured to repeat a gossipy story to Hannah More. One would think her method of treatment would be a sure cure for scandal.

NEW USE FOR THE TELEPHONE.—It is said that a gentleman who possesses a remarkably intelligent dog recently lost the animal in the streets of New York. Jack was happily found by a friend of his owner, who recognized him immediately, and at once called up his friend by telephone. "Have you lost your dog?" "Yes; have you seen him?" was the reply. "Suppose you call him through the telephone." The dog was lifted up, and the ear piece placed at his ear. "Jack, Jack!" called the master. Jack instantly recognized the voice and began to yelp. He licked the telephone for joy, seeming to think his master was inside the machine.

THE WOOING OF SENDAI.

AN OLD JAPANESE LEGEND.

For ever on the pine clad shore
Of Takasango's Bay
The cold waves dash their crystal heads
In many-tinted spray,
Less cold than she whom Sendai's son
Woo'd for so long and strangely won.

Fairer was she than aught of earth,
Divine in form and face,
Each limb and feature charmed the eye
With more than mortal grace:
Yet naught of earth could move or thrill
Her heart, as marble hard and chill.

Long was the suit that Sendai urged:
Slow years their courses ran,
Yet never dared the immortal maid
Hear love from mortal man.
Sky born, how could she bend below
And e'en a prince's worship know?

And yet she loved him. Day by day,
Beneath one wind-swept pine,
She heard him to his samisen
Singing her praise divine,
A woman still though goddess, she
Drank in his worship eagerly.

Entranced, enslaved, he saw the light
Burn in her deep-lashed eyes;
No longer thwarted, 'neath the pine,
He clasped his beauteous prize.
Loud thunder rolled; the gods above
Saw that a goddess stooped to love.

And then, the story says, the gods
Changed each into a pine;
And still with sounds of ocean's voice,
Their love-songs intertwine,
Condemned to sigh and sob in vain,
In storm and sunshine, wind and rain.

—*J. Chambers.*

THE LAW OF DREAMS.

Do we always dream? Many eminent men answer in the affirmative. They regard dreaming as a normal accompaniment of sleep. Yet this view is open to much question. General experience confirms the theory involved in the common expression, deep, dreamless sleep. We are not thoroughly refreshed by sleep which has been full of dreams, and on the other hand, when after unusual fatigue we sleep very profoundly there is usually, on awaking, no recollection of having dreamed.

Another questionable theory about dreams is, that they are essentially phenomena of the transition stage between sleeping and waking. That many dreams belong to this category, and that we remember best the dreams of this period, is undoubtedly true. Many dreams are excited by the same cause which awakes us, although we feel as if a long interval had intervened. A door is slammed or a shot fired near us. These sounds excite a train of dreaming which runs a long and intricate course, and finally we awake. The noise caused both the dream and the awaking, and probably only a few seconds intervened, although our dreams may have seemed to include the events of a lifetime. It is related of Lord Holland that on one occasion, when some person was reading to him, he fell asleep, and dreamed an apparently long dream. On awaking, however, he heard the end of the sentence which the reader had begun before he fell asleep, so that his dream must have been of the briefest duration. Yet this theory—that dreams belong only to the transition or waking stage—seems conclusively disproved by decisive evidence—that persons can be known, by the expression on their faces, and by their muttered words, to be dreaming in ordinary sleep, as well as by the correlated facts of somnambulism.

Whence is derived the material of our dreams? This question often admits of a ready answer, but sometimes it offers insoluble problems. Frequently, as Sir Benjamin Brodie says: "That which constitutes the imagination during the day is the foundation of our dreams at night." Dreams are thus, to a limited extent, a gauge and reflex of character, but nothing is more familiar than the mysterious manner in which the most improbable and most bizarre elements becomes mixed up in our dreams. The almost forgotten scenes and events of childhood flash before our eyes with bewildering intensity. Persons to whom we have not devoted a thought for years arise before us in dreams. We travel in unknown lands, we see demons and monsters; perhaps we are transported to the stars, or approach the sun and see the belching flames of his huge furnaces. These facts seem inexplicable, but we cannot doubt that for each there is a natural and reasonable explanation. Some event of recent experience, some fact in a book, some sight or sound has touched a long silent chord, and made it give forth strange music. Events of which we are entirely unconscious may influence our dreams.

Dr. Carpenter relates a story of a gentleman who went to bed in a strange room, and all night long he was tormented by dreams of lizards crawling over him. In the morning he noticed a clock upon the mantel-piece, on the base of which lizards were engraved, but he had no consciousness of having observed them on the previous night. His eye must unconsciously have lighted upon the lizards, and this unnoticed circumstance must have given the direction to his imagination during the hours of sleep. A single fact like this is sufficient to suggest possible explanations of many of the most puzzling phenomena of dreams.

The state of the bodily organs is often the explanation of our dreams. An undigested supper becomes a torturing demon. A painful toe gives rise to dreams of inquisitorial torments. A mountain of guilt seems to be crushing us down, but it is only

That confounded cucumber
We ate and can't digest.

Dr. Reid relates that, having had his head blistered after a fall, and a plaster having been put on which pained him excessively during the night, on falling asleep towards morning he dreamed very distinctly that he had fallen into the hands of a party of Indians and was scalped. The sequence of ideas is here clear enough.

Experiments have been conducted which prove that dreams may be excited, or their course modified, by artificial means. Stroking the lips, tickling the skin, pinching the muscles, will, in many cases, excite a train of ideas in the dreamer. If the irritation be slight, it will probably pass unnoticed; if it be somewhat stronger, dreaming will be excited or modified; if stronger still, the dreamer is aroused.

Many dreamers are also sleep-talkers, and of these there are various classes. Sometimes the talk is unintelligible gibberish, or it may consist only of occasional disconnected exclamations, or may seem to be detached portions of an intelligent speech. More rarely it possesses perfect logical coherence and sequence. Sleep-talkers sometimes respond to remarks made to them, and if an idea be suggested by a bystander, they occasionally fly off upon some new train of thought. It is curious and interesting that most sleep-talkers awake at once on their names being distinctly pronounced.

Grains of Gold.

Thankfulness is the tune of angels.

Life is a short day, but it is a working day.

It is a great virtue in good-natured youth to be able to say NO.

Great good is often unaccomplished, merely because it is not attempted.

Life is a quarry, out of which we are to mold and chisel and complete a character.

Prayer is the outlet of the saint's sorrow, and the inlet of their support and comfort.

The oak, that now spreadeth its branches towards the heavens, was once but an acorn in the bowels of the earth.

An impartial spirit will admire goodness or greatness wherever he meets it, and whether it makes for or against him.

Power is so characteristically calm that calmness in itself has the aspect of power. And forbearance implies strength.

It was wisely said, by a man of great observation, that there are so many miseries beyond riches as on this side of them.

Covetousness, by a greed of getting more, deprives itself of the true end of getting—the enjoyment of what it has got.

Strive for that serenity of spirit that will enable you to make the best of things. That means contentment in its best sense.

What a person praises is perhaps a surer standard, even than what he condemns, of his character, information and abilities.

Honor your engagement. If you promise to meet a man or to do a certain thing at a certain moment, be ready at the appointed time.

The apprehension of evil is many times worse than the evil itself; and the ills a man fears he shall suffer, he suffers in the very fear of them.

The moral law is written on the tablets of eternity. For every false word or unrighteous deed, for cruelty or oppression, for lust or vanity, the price has to be paid at last.

If thy soul thirsteth for honor, if thy ear hath any pleasure in the voice of praise, raise thyself from the dust wherrof thou art made, and exalt thy aim to something that is praiseworthy.

Femininities.

Cheerful looks make every dish a feast.

Queen Victoria is exactly five feet high.

Lavender was brought from the South of Europe in 1568.

It is the engaging girl that becomes the soonest engaged.

The people who give tone to society seldom give anything else.

Woman is born for love, and it is impossible to turn her from seeking it.

If the oven is too hot for baking, place a small dish of cold water in it.

Music: A polite art which serves its highest usefulness as a stimulus to conversation.

The American hand is smaller than the English hand, but the nails are not so handsome.

She who loves to read, and knows how to reflect, has laid by a perpetual feast for her old age.

It is said that people with imagination are apt to have long, taper fingers and beautiful finger nails.

A country paper advertises for sale a pew which "commands a view of nearly the whole congregation."

Jeweled hairpins are the latest, and are in all sorts of pretty designs, novel and attractive at the same time.

A young widow never knows how much (or how little) she loved her departed old husband until the will is read.

During the housecleaning season there is no place like home—and that's something to be extremely thankful for.

A few days ago Mrs. English, of Colquitt county, Ga., gave birth to triplets. Five years ago she did the same thing.

Civility: An ancient form of behavior, popular in feudal times, but unsuited to the exigencies of modern civilization.

Every noble acquisition is attended with its risks. He who fears to encounter the one must not expect to obtain the other.

True politeness is perfect ease and freedom. It consists simply in treating others just as you love to be treated yourself.

Among seasonable novelties is the strawberry pin, of clustered rubies, the gold setting representing the seeds very faithfully.

A woman may not be able to sharpen a pencil or throw stones at a hen, but she can pack more articles into a trunk than a man can into a hay wagon.

Girls are so scarce in Dakota that when a new girl enters the Territory all the brass bands turn out en masse and serenade her with "Sweet Violets."

Cautiously avoid talking of the domestic affairs either of yourselves or of other people. Yours are nothing to them but tedious gossip; theirs are nothing to you.

A snuffed candle end, with blackened wick and grease dripping down the sides, and a rustic's jack-knife, with two blades, are novel forms for match boxes.

When certain persons abuse us, let us ask ourselves what description of characters it is that they admire; we shall often find this a very consolatory question.

A little girl was trying to tell her mother how beautifully a certain lady could trill in singing, and said, "Oh, mamma, you ought to hear her gargle; she does it so sweetly."

A young woman in Fonda, N. Y., is said to have gone on kleconghing for three months past, except when under the influence of opiates, until she is now a mere wreck.

A teaspoonful of ground mustard in a cup of warm water is a prompt and reliable emetic, and should be resorted to in cases of poisoning or cramps in the stomach from overheating.

The Russian ladies almost cover themselves with diamonds and pearls, and affect the most dazzling colors in their dress, the favorite hues being crimson, saffron, violet, pink and green.

A mother and daughter, who had not seen each other for 18 years, have just had a sad reunion in a house of correction at Milwaukee. They express a determination to start life anew together.

The chief characteristic of a girl should be truth. Of all the duties, love of truth, with faith and constancy in it, ranks first and highest. Truth is God. To love God and to love truth are one and the same.

Husband: "Was the Ladies' Club lively to-night?" Wife: "No; awfully dull. Every member was present, and, of course, one can't speak of people before their faces; so we had nothing at all to talk about."

An old lady, who had several unmarried daughters, fed them largely on a fish diet, because, as she ingeniously observed, fish is rich in phosphorus, and phosphorus is the essential thing in making matches.

Powdered resin is the best thing to stop bleeding from cuts. After the powder is sprinkled on, wrap the wound with soft cotton cloth. As soon as the wound begins to feel feverish keep the cloth wet with cold water.

Miss Dudley: "There is no object so beautiful to me as a conscientious young man. I watch him as I do a star in heaven." Mrs. Snoberly: "That's my view, exactly; in fact, I think there is nothing so beautiful as a young man, even if he isn't conscientious."

A little girl on her visit to the country for the first time, an exchange relates, had never seen a cow before, and, after watching the milking process with eyes full of astonishment, drew near, and placing her hand on the cow's distended side, exclaimed: "Why, she's chock full of it, ain't she?"

Masculinities.

The pawnbroker is a trusty citizen.

The latest name for matrimony is "two-icide."

Better be the jest of a fool than his favorite.

Compass charms are in demand again for gentlemen.

A man's reputation is no better for being gilt-edged.

If you are in a passion shut your mouth, for words increase it.

Those who respect age deserve to live to be old, and to be respected themselves.

There are times and circumstances in which not to speak out is at least to connive.

He that is choice of his time will also be choice of his company and choice of his actions.

It is easier to be generous than just. Men are sometimes bountiful who are not honest.

Whosoever speaketh of another's failings with pleasure shall hear of his own with shame.

The Marquis of Salisbury's shockingly bad hat is a constant theme of comment in England.

Rounder says that his wife is the lightweight champion. She always stays up till he comes home.

Many a self-made man would have done better by himself had he let the contract out to somebody else.

Recollect every day the things seen, heard, or read, which make any addition to our understanding.

When a man takes your hand with a firm cordial grasp, it is a sure sign that his heart is full or his purse empty.

"Uncle," said a sweet girl of sixteen, "is love blind?" "Yes, my dear, especially when the other party is rich."

Indulge not thyself in the passion of anger; it is whetting a sword to wound thy own breast, or murder thy friend.

The best advice to be given to husbands is to be good and you will be happy. To wives, be happy and you will be good.

One danger of female suffrage is that the women may want the men to bet them $50 bonnets against $5 hats on the result.

A good test of one's condition is to be able to sleep well. Toil that does not interfere with sleep cannot be said to be excessive.

"Mary," said a woman to a new servant, "when you hang out the clothes be careful always to put the nicest pieces nearest the street."

A man may not increase his own value by insuring his life for a handsome sum, but he is certain to make his widow more popular.

The stingiest man that a certain Southern paper has knowledge of is one in Florida who uses a wart on the back of his neck for a collar button.

The rule is unfailing—given two men of equal talent, health and fortune; the one who laughs will live longer than the other and accomplish more work in the world.

Starvation, as found by coroner's juries, caused the deaths of 49 persons in London during the year 1888, as shown by an official report to the House of Commons.

A girl who has married a young man by the name of William says that she intends no treason in affirming that hereafter she will follow the dictates of her own sweet will.

An aptitude for criticism is shown among people who bite their nails. These people are cynical and severe, uncharitable and bitter; they write a small, cramped illegible hand.

Smile not at the legend as vain that once in holy hands a worthless stone became a heap of silver. Let thy alchemist be contentment, and no stone or ore can be equal to thee.

Senator Pasco, of Florida, went into the Confederate army a private and came out a private. He could command as large a salary in a dime museum as a curiosity as in the Senate.

Charles Abrams, of Cincinnati, was lately beaten by his wife in a game of croquet, and in revenge attempted to strangle her, but eventually failed, and was locked up as a lunatic.

It is a singular fact, but nevertheless true, that when two young men meet they address each other: "How are you, old man?" and that when two old fellows meet they say, "My boy."

At no moment of difficulty does a husband, knowing his own utter helplessness, draw so close to his wife's side for comfort and assistance as when he wants a button sewed on his shirt collar.

"James," said a stern old veteran to his son, "James, never kick a man when he is down, because it's cowardly." "I won't, father," responded James; "nor will I kick him when he is up, because it's risky."

Very young man: "You wouldn't think it, but I've just paid $70,000 for a house, all made by my own pluck and perseverance." Young lady: "Really! What business are you in?" Very young man: "I'm a son-in-law."

A man is always a fool. If he be young the world says, "When he is older he will know more." If he be older, it says, "He is old enough to know better." And when he is old, it says, "There is no kind of a fool equal to an old fool."

A young man named Wylie, of Salem, Mass., was engaged to be married to a young lady named Alice Powers. He supplied her with money to purchase the wedding outfit, which she did. Then she eloped and was married to Charles Sanderson in the dress paid for with Wylie's money.

Among the titles of recent books and pamphlets of English writers are: "London!" "Horrible London!" "Starving London!" "The Modern Babylon!" "How the Poor Live!" "Seven Curses of London!" "The Modern Plagues of London!" and "The Bitter Cry of Outcast London!"

Recent Book Issues.

"The Stork Flying Eastward" is the title of a little book of poems, by G. A. Hammond, of Kingsclear, N. B. Philosophical and devotional in the main, they are full of poetic thought and good versification.

Messrs. J. B. Lippincott Company have arranged to publish the "Report of the Commission appointed by the University of Pennsylvania to investigate Modern Spiritualism, in accordance with the request of the late Henry Seybert." Considering the high standing of the University, as well as that of the individual members of the committee, this report will likely prove the most valuable addition of recent years to the scientific knowledge of this abstruse subject.

"One of the Duanes," by Alice King Hamilton, published in the Lippincott Series of Select Novels, is a spirited and well-told story, full of interest and graceful pen pictures of life in Florida in an army station. The heroine, a New York girl, the "Duane" in question, is a beauty and an heiress, who is visiting an officer's wife at Barrancas, near Pensacola. There is an outlawed brother who turns up as a common soldier in the regiment. They recognize each other, and the suspicions, cross-purposes, love episodes, etc., beginning in this source, go on in a most enjoyable and artistic way to the conclusion. The story ends happily, and is just the sort for a summer novel. Price, 25 cents.

"Practical Lessons in Nursing; Outlines for the Management of Diet," is a highly valuable little book on a most important subject. It is by Dr. E. D. Brush, of this city, staff-professor in the University of Pennsylvania Hospital. The "Lessons" embrace the best results of his study and observation, and may be taken as representing the best knowledge on the subject today. For sale by Lippincott & Co. Price, $1.

"Wallingford," a novel from the pen of an anonymous writer, is drawn from scenes which have mainly occurred in the immediate neighborhood of this city, and takes its title from the pleasant little town on the Pennsylvania Railroad. It is the history of a sanguine inventor, who lost all, even life, in the furtherance of his schemes, and is written with considerable ability. The author is evidently a young man who has seen a good deal of life, and transmutes it into readable, if sometimes extravagant form, in these pages. In all its elements, however, it is marked by a good attempt at originality, and will be read with pleasure. For sale by Lippincott & Co. Price, $1.25.

"Mistaken Paths," by Herbert G. Dick, is a new story on a very old theme. A young girl, parental tyranny, the rich aunt, a lover, trip to New York, head turned by foreign count, marriage with lover, unhappy life, divorce, reconciliation. Let the reader of ordinary literature take these incidents as enumerated, season them with vanity and self-will, and see what mixture will be produced, and mistaken paths followed. The author is evidently new to the pen, and save for the moral of the book, which is good, it would have a hard time to give good reasons for its existence in the world of reading. Lippincott & Co., publishers. Price, $1.25.

"Behind the Blue Ridge" is a story descriptive of life in an odd-mannered and odd-located section of the South, up to, around, and after the war. Frances C. Baylor, the authoress, has plainly taken a series of photographs from facts, and arranged them in the frame of a sweetly-simple, though, perhaps, too sombre a narrative. It is a real addition to the valuable novel literature of the day, and read either for its subject or its method, is equally enjoyable. The central figure in the tale is one that calls forth the best sympathies of the heart, and while, perhaps, true to fact, in the usual course of life, we would rather see the old man's life end in sunshine than in one of the storms that ever seemed to follow him. For sale by Lippincott & Co. Price, $1.25.

THE LAW OF KINDNESS.—People know not what they lose by a surly and overbearing spirit. Kindness is the only way to soften the heart and make all those our friends who previously were our enemies. Here is an anecdote in illustration:

The horse of a gentleman happening to stray into the road, a neighbor put him into the pound. Meeting the owner soon after, he told him what he had done, and added, "If ever I catch him in the road hereafter, I'll do it again!"

"Neighbor," replied the other, "not long since I looked out of my window in the night and saw your cattle in my mowing ground. I drove them out and shut them in your yard, and I'll do it again!"

Struck with the reply, the man liberated the horse from the pound, and paid the charges himself.

THE END OF LABOR.—Aristotle says that the end of labor is to gain leisure. It is a great saying. We have in modern times a totally wrong view of the matter. Noble work is a noble thing, but not all work. Most people seem to think that any business is in itself something grand; that to be intensely employed, for instance, about something which has no truth, beauty or usefulness in it, which makes no man happier or wiser, is still the perfection of human endeavor, so that the work is intense.

IT is a great happiness to be praised of them that are most praiseworthy.

Was She Heartless?

BY C. C. R.

ISA HOWARD was a tall, stately brunette, whose lovely Spanish beauty held all masculine hearts captive.

On this occasion her dress was of nun's veiling of the most delicate peach pink, well covered in flounces of dainty laces; her hat was white, and the parasol which she held in one little white-gloved hand over her queenly head, was a mixture of silk and laces, in perfect keeping with her other adornments.

Her escort, who had just left her, was dark also; and sparkling wit, with the coquettish glances she bestowed on him so freely from under the silken lashes, had the desired effect, for he flushed like a girl when he came to his friend's side to tell him all she had said and done, as he always did, poor fellow.

His friend, Loyd Russell, was tall and fair, and at thirty boasted of being heart-whole and fancy free, saying he had passed unscathed through all the ordeals and traps of scheming mammas and marriageable daughters, while Charlie Dane, whom we have just mentioned, was in love, it seemed, with Isabel.

"Hullo, Charlie, old fellow," said Loyd, rising and slapping him on the shoulder as he approached. "Who was that young lady who just left you, and who, it seems, had such perfect control over you as to make you blush and pale at her will?"

"Oh, that was Miss Howard, what do you think of her?" and he scanned Loyd's face.

"Well," said his companion slowly, "I should judge from the young lady's looks that she was either in love or pretending to be, with a certain young fellow by the name of Charlie Dane, who adores the very ground she walks on, and worships at her shrine of beauty as others have done, hoping to gain the prize in the end."

"Wouldn't you like to meet her?"

"I would, if it would render you any pleasure."

"Very well: I will tell her."

And Charlie turned away gratified, while Loyd sought his own room to make himself presentable.

Towards evening he strolled out on the beach, and saw, a few yards ahead of him, Charlie and Miss Howard walking arm-in-arm, the former talking earnestly, and she drooping her head and laughing a low, little silvery laugh, as was her wont.

As Loyd drew near Charlie stepped forward and introduced him.

Loyd bowed politely, and Isa frankly extended her hand, saying, in the sweetest voice he had ever heard—

"I feel almost well acquainted, having heard you spoken of so frequently by your friend, Mr. Dane."

He felt at ease at once, and wondered as he looked on the beautiful, dusky face, all smiles, roses and bewitching dimples, how she could be so heartless as she was reputed to be, but determined not to become infatuated and be defeated in the end, as others were, he was coolly polite, and nothing more.

"What do you think of her?" asked Charlie, the next day.

"Well," Loyd returned indifferently, "she is the most charming of her kind."

"Do you really think that she is heartless?"

"So they say. The best thing for you to do, Charlie, is to try your fate."

"I mean to," he responded with enthusiasm. "I can but fail, which is no worse than others have done."

About nine o'clock Loyd wandered out on the beach, feeling too restless to converse with the many ladies who required his attention when in their presence.

His thoughts wandered to Isa and Charlie, and he wondered if she would surrender this time and own her love for him, and then he wondered if she did really love him.

The evening was very sultry, and as the atmosphere was oppressive on the beach, he made his way to a rocky promontory that extended out over the still, dark waters. Presently he heard the sound of approaching footsteps and voices, which he at once recognized as those of Isa Howard and Charlie Dane.

Greatly to his annoyance they seated themselves just beneath him on a rock. Not wishing to overstep the bounds of good breeding by eavesdropping he quietly endeavored to find some means of escape; but it was impossible, as he could not withdraw without being seen. So muttering something that sounded like ill-luck, he was compelled to await the result of his unfortunate position.

"Isa," he heard Charlie say, "do you always intend to trifle with me?"

"Why, Mr. Dane, who said I was trifling?"

And there was injured pride in her low, sweet voice.

She did love Charlie, then, after all, thought Loyd; and he felt that he was jealous—he who had never spoken to her but once. Why should he care?

"Isa, you do love me a little, dear? There is hope for me yet?"

"Yes; there is hope while life remains."

And though her voice sounded sweet, there was cruelty in its tones.

"Isa, do you love me? I shall never ask you again."

Poor Charlie, he had now come to the test.

Loyd heard her laugh that same little laugh, as she said, somewhat gently—

"It's too bad, Charlie, if you are growing sentimental. I was just thinking this morning what a sensible fellow you were—never quoting poetry or going into tragedy, as seems natural to all your sex."

And again she laughed.

"Surely, Isa, you have given me every encouragement," he went on. "It is but natural that I should think you cared for me, is it not?"

"Well, yes, I suppose so. You men have the audacity to think anything."

But as he did not reply she felt sorry, for she quickly added—

"And, besides, I do not expect to marry for some years yet; and when I do, I must console myself with a fair gentleman—for instance, Mr. Russell."

Loyd's heart gave a wild bound as she spoke his name, but he quickly stilled its throbbings, when he thought that, as she had finished her work with Charlie, she would doubtless like to get him in tow to befool him in the same way; but he determined to be on his guard, and ignore every charm.

"Well, then, Isa, this must be our farewell," and her lover stopped and extended his hand.

"Surely, Charlie, we can be friends," she said in a surprised and injured voice.

"No," he returned coldly, "it would neither be pleasant nor necessary for us to continue our friendship."

"Very well," she returned haughtily, and turning from him, she swept away with the air of an insulted queen.

While Loyd, eavesdropper as he was, concealed himself till they disappeared from view, and then rising from his uncomfortable position, returned to the hotel.

On entering his room he found Charlie sitting by the window, his face buried in his hands.

"What's the matter, old fellow?" he said with assumed innocence, going to his friend's side, and placing his hands on his shoulders in true brotherly sympathy. "Has she refused you?"

Charlie only nodded, and Loyd consoled him by telling him that there was as good fish in the sea as ever were caught, and that he was by far too good for her.

Charlie did not tell him anything, but he was not over anxious, as he had heard everything, although unintentionally.

All night long Loyd was haunted by Isa's dark, false face, and it was nearly dawn before he found forgetfulness in sleep.

When he awoke the next morning the sun was streaming in through the open windows, and Charlie was busily engaged packing his trunk.

"What are you doing? You're not going home?" said Loyd, in surprise.

"No," he said, in a strange changed voice. "I am going to leave for other parts."

All efforts to reconcile him were useless, and he left the same day.

It was just twilight, and Loyd, feeling lonesome, wandered out on the beach where he could see the ocean and hear its wild roar. And while standing and watching its dark waters, and thinking how far from him they were bearing Charlie, he felt a warm hand on his arm, and turning, beheld at his side Isa Howard, looking divine in creamy laces and a delicate jonquil shawl, which was thrown gracefully about her dainty shoulders.

For a few moments they stood gazing at each other; he drinking in the dazzling beauty of this heartless creature, who doubtless had come to weave the toils of her falseness about him since Charlie was no longer here.

She was the first to break the silence.

"Mr. Russell!" she said timidly.

"I am that person," he replied, in cuttingly cold tones.

"Is it true that Mr. Dane has gone abroad?"

"It is!" he returned gruffly, looking over her head and utterly ignoring her presence.

"What were his reasons?" came from the quivering lips.

"I think you can best answer that question," he returned, almost savagely, as he turned and rested his eyes on her, and took in at a glance everything, from the blue-black hair, coiled low on the neck, to the tiny slippered feet.

"I don't see how I could have had anything to do with it," she answered, her dark eyes wandering over the wide expanse of ocean, as if in thought, while she nervously clasped and unclasped her shapely hands.

"Do you mean to say," he began, harshly, "that you did not teach him to love you, and then led him on by your cruel smiles and false face, until you had him at your feet, and then laughed him to scorn as you did, and always will do with every one who has the misfortune to cross your path?"

The bloom faded from her cheeks, and her dark, velvety eyes were full of tears.

"I did not love him," she said, vacantly.

"No," he returned, harshly, "you have no heart, but employ your time in destroying those of others."

"It is not my fault if other people love me," she said, sadly. "But I don't see what possible difference it can make to you."

And she raised her dark eyes to his face in a questioning gaze.

"No," he said, his voice trembling. "I suppose you do not know he was my friend, and that I have had the misfortune to love you too."

And he turned away to conceal the emotion he really felt.

"Are you going?" she asked, gently.

"Yes," he returned, brokenly; "I, too, shall go away, and try to forget that I have ever met you."

And as he held out his hand she burst into tears, and clung to him, and begged him not to go.

"I love you, too!" she sobbed.

And Loyd Russell, who had always ignored the sex, actually found himself holding fast in his arms Isa Howard, who had surrendered at a moment's notice.

Years have since passed, and in sunny Italy Charlie has found a wife whose beauty is the light of his life, while Loyd and Isa have a home, in the summer, where they first met.

And she often upbraids him for condemning her for not loving other people.

"For if I had," she says, in playful reproval, "I should never have had the honor of being Mrs. Loyd Russell."

A LAND OF MUMMIES.—The ancient city of Pachacamac was long, long ago the Mecca of South America. The name means "He who imitates the Universe."

It was a resort of pilgrims from far and near, and also the burial-place of ten thousands of ancient dead, and from a study of many mummies found there much light has been given to old-time customs.

Many of these were enveloped in a braided net-work or sack of rushes or coarse grass, bound closely about the body by plaited cords; just beneath these coverings were wrappers of stout, plain cotton cloth, fastened by a gay cord of llama wool, and about and next the body a garment of finer texture; the body itself revealed a mahogany-colored surface.

The implements of the person's trade were inclosed among these many wrappings, also a copper coin.

About women mummies were wrappings of finer cloth, and always a comb grasped by one hand; this seemed as if made from the rays of fishes' fins, having for handle the hard, woody part of the dwarf palm. In the other hand lay a cane-handled fan, its ornamentation the feathers of parrots and humming-birds.

About the neck were three strings of shells, and, as with the men, domestic implements lay between the various coverings—an ancient spindle for cotton-spinning, half covered with spun thread, as if death had surprised the woman busy with her daily toil.

If a mummy was discovered seated upon a work-box containing bits of knitting-work, weaving implements, skeins and spools of thread, needles of bone and bronze, a comb, knife, fan—the small domestic properties given to one opening to fair sweet womanhood—then was it understood that a maiden in her youth and beauty had been laid away; that the sleep of death had come with unexpected summons, for at hand were her cosmetic tubes—bird bones, these with a wad of cotton to close the opening, and with them some sort of a little mill for grinding and preparing the pigments. Added to these was a mirror—a piece of iron pyrites shaped like half an egg, the plane side of it highly polished.

The maiden's hair was braided; a thin narrow bracelet encircled one arm; there was also an ornamental golden butterfly; and between the feet of the young girl lay the dried body of a pet bird—oftenest a parrot was thus honored.

HAND-SHAKING.—There is nothing more characteristic than shakes of the hand. "I have classified them," says Sydney Smith. "There is the 'high official,' the body erect, and a rapid, short shake near the chin. There is the 'mortimain,' the flat hand introduced into your palm, and hardly conscious of its contiguity. The 'digital,' one finger held out—much used by the high clergy. Then there is the 'shakus rusticus,' when your hand is seized in an iron grasp betokening rude health, warm heart, and distance from the metropolis, but producing a strong sense of relief on your part when you find your hand released and your fingers unbroken. The next to this is the 'retentive shake,' one which beginning with vigor, pause, as it were, to take breath, but without relinquishing its prey, and before you are aware begins again, till you feel anxious as to the result, and have no shake left in you."

SLEEP A PREVENTIVE OF HEADACHE.—A scientific writer says: "Sleep if taken at the right moment, will prevent an attack of nervous headache. If the subjects of such headache will watch the symptoms of its coming, they can notice that it begins with a feeling of weariness or heaviness. This is the time that a sleep of an hour, or even two, as nature guides, will effectually prevent the headache. If not taken just then, it will be too late, for, after the attack is fairly under way, it is impossible to get sleep till far into the night perhaps. It is so common in these days for doctors to forbid having their patients waked to take medicine if they are asleep when the hour comes round that the people have learned the lesson pretty well, and they generally know than sleep is better for the sick than medicine. But it is not so well known that sleep is a wonderful preventive of disease—better than tonic regulators and stimulants."

DRY DIRT.—Lice will breed on all classes of animals and fowls at this season unless the quarters be kept clean. Dry dirt is one of the best preventives of lice, especially if used on the floors, but the stock should be examined occasionally. If in good condition, however, lice do not attack animals readily.

COUSIN FLORENCE: "Well, Tommy, and so you like your little friend Philip, do you? And how old do you think he is?" Tommy: "Well, I don't exactly know; but I should think he was rather old, for he blows his own nose."

Humorous.

HOW IT HAPPENED.

The pitcher fired the ball to twist it;
The batter struck so hard and missed it.

The catcher caught the ball and dropped it,
Then rolled it to the pitcher, who stopped it.

The pitcher then to the batter socked it;
The batter shut his eyes and knocked it.

The short-stop jumped for the ball from habit,
But jumped not high enough to grab it.

The left-field from the ground he picked it,
And to the first-base quickly slicked it.

The first-base tried but didn't catch it,
And then raced after the ball to fetch it.

The batter went like lightning greasy,
And made the second and third base easy.

The first-base got the ball and roughed it
To the third-base chap, who muffed it.

The batter scooted for home a-flying,
And tumbled over the base a-dying.

The crowd set up a terrible yelling,
And charged the players with game a-selling.

And first to the umpire gave a cuffing,
Then kicked right out of him the stuffing.

The gate-keeper laughed at the fuss so funny,
And then skipped off with the hoodle money.
—U. N. NONE.

Low people—Dwarfs.

Roll call—The baker's visit.

Dressing for turkeys—Feathers.

A matter of course—A river bed.

Well backed-up—The dromedary.

The best size for a man—Exercise.

A bootless task—Putting on one's socks.

A bad thing about gold—Not having it.

A pair of fly specks will not assist weak eyes.

Highest approbation — Applause from the gallery.

Sign of good breeding — Getting the prize at a dog show.

Why do cows lock horns—Because two of a kine can never agree.

Be temperate in your diet. Our first parents ate themselves out of house and home.

It seems absurd to write a book in this country and then have it bound in Morocco.

Why should aeronauts not speak angry words in a balloon?—Because it is death for them to fall out.

It may seem paradoxical, but it is nevertheless true, that a man cannot smoke a cigar too short unless he smokes it too long.

He: "Dear Alice, give me a kiss—just one!" She: "I dare not; I have never kissed any man." He: "Neither have I. I swear it."

Can young people be said to grow faster when they are in love than at any other time, simply because being in love always increases their sighs so wonderfully.

Father, addressing his little boy, who has brought home a bad mark from school: "Now, Johnnie, what shall I do with this stick?" Johnnie: "Why, go for a walk, papa."

"What is the matter with the baby?" asked a lady of a little girl, whose baby brother she had understood to be ailing. "Oh, nothin' much," was the answer; "he's only hatchin' teeth."

Science enumerates nearly six hundred species of organic forms in the air we breathe. Just think of it! Every time you draw in a breath a whole zoological garden slips down your windpipe!

Young Hopesby says the worst trait possessed by his girl's father is his proneness to misconstrue plain, practical questions. When he asked him for his daughter's hand, the father gave him his foot.

"No, sir!" thundered an irate father, "no, sir! My daughter can never be yours!" To which the young man quietly replied: "I don't want her to be my daughter; I want her to be my wife."

A gentleman having a deaf servant was advised by a friend to discharge her. "No, no," replied the gentleman, with much good feeling, "that poor creature could never hear of another situation."

Father, angrily: "You have been in the water; you were fishing." Son: "Yes, I was in the water; but I got a boy out who might have been drowned." Father: "Indeed! who was it?" Son: "Myself."

"You seem to be all the better for your visit to the seaside." "I ought to be. I gained over 300 pounds in weight while I was there." "Impossible!" "Not at all! Come with me to dinner, and I'll introduce you to her. We were married in November."

An old bachelor editor thus, in his spite, comments on a recent moonlight: "We left our sanctum at 12 last night, and on our way home we saw a young lady and gentleman holding a gate on its hinges. They were evidently indignant at being kept out so late, as we saw them bite each other several times."

"Whar yer bin?" he asked, as the other boy suddenly came around the corner. "To the doctor's." "Fur yer mother?" "No; fur me." "What ails you?" "Tongue all coated. See there!" "What does that mean?" "Heaps!" chuckled the other; "that means rhubarb to begin on, and loaf-sugar, sweet cake, a bicycle, and a six-bladed knife before I get well! Don't you wish you was me?"

A SPECIAL PROVIDENCE.—There is a Jewish tradition concerning Moses that beautifully illustrates the disputed point of a special Providence.

That great prophet, says one of the rabbins, was once called by God to the top of a high mountain, and there permitted to propose any questions he pleased concerning the government of the universe. In the midst of one of his inquiries as to Providence, he was directed to look down upon the plain below, where was a clear spring of water.

At this spring a soldier had alighted from his horse to drink. No sooner had he satisfied his thirst and gone, than a little boy came to the same place, and finding a purse the soldier had dropped, picked it up and went away. Soon after there came an infirm old man, with hoary hairs, and weary with age and travelling, who, having quenched his thirst, sat down for rest and refreshment by the side of the spring.

The soldier by this time had missed his purse, and returning, demands it of the old man, who affirms he had not seen it, and appeals to Heaven to attest his innocence and the truth of his assertion. The soldier, not believing his assertions, kills him on the spot.

Moses falls on his face, in horror and amazement that such an event should be permitted by God, when the Divine voice thus prevents his expostulation: "Be not surprised, Moses, that the Judge of all the earth should have suffered this to come to pass. To you there appears no reason why that child should be the occasion of the old man's blood being spilled; but know that that same old man, years ago, was the murderer of that child's father!"

BADGES OF THE APOSTLES.—The painters of the Middle Ages used to represent the Apostles with special badges which were generally symbolical of some incident in their lives.

Andrew was depicted with a cross, because he was crucified: Bartholomew with a knife, because he was flayed; James the Greater with a pilgrim's staff and gourd bottle, because he was the patron saint of pilgrims; James the Less with a fuller's pole, because he was slain by Simeon the fuller with a blow on the head with his pole; John with a cup and a winged serpent flying out of it, in allusion to the tradition that the apostle was challenged by a priest of Diana to drink a cup of poison. John made the sign of the cross on the cup, whereupon Satan, likes dragon, flew from it, and the apostle drank the cup with safety.

Judas was represented with a bag, because he bare the bag and "what was put therein;" Jude with a club, because he was killed by that weapon; Matthew with a hatchet, because he was slain by one; Matthias with a battle-axe, because after having been stoned he was beheaded; Paul with a sword, because his head was cut off with one; Peter with a bunch of keys and also with a cock, in reference to the familiar episodes; Philip with a long staff surmounted by a cross, because he died by being hung by the neck to a tall pillar; Simon with a saw, because he was sawn to death; Thomas with a lance, because his body was pierced with a lance.

Malaria and Dyspepsia.

It may not be generally known, yet it is a very stubborn fact that thousands think themselves the subject of Dyspepsia, while they are suffering from Malaria. In fact Malaria does produce all the symptoms of Dyspepsia—the bad taste—the coated tongue, the poor or fastidious appetite, the unrefreshing sleep, the irresolution and mental depression, the backache or pains in the limbs and bones, all may be the result of bad air-malaria. Thousands suffer from it, all over the country, and drug themselves with pills, nostrums or quinine to no purpose, often making themselves worse from the drugs than they were from the disease.

What you want is a remedy that will CURE and not poison the system, leaving the last state worse than the first. The perfection of a cure is that it is unnoticed. All the patient should know about it, is that he gets well. It is little comfort to escape the demon of disease if one must be drowned in the deep sea of drugs. The one Medicine that does this work is HUMPHREYS' SPECIFICS NO. TEN and SIXTEEN. They cure and leave the patient well, not suffering from a new disease, the result of drug poisoning. Thousands use the SPECIFICS with perfect success. A fair trial will convince the most skeptical.

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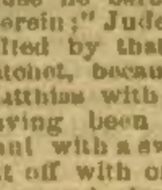

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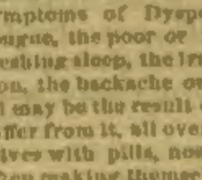

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A FAMILY MATTER.—During the last two years a curious succession of marriages occurred in a New York village. As the count goes there were five Hamby boys and the same number of Starnes girls. As the Hamby boys began marrying Mr. Starnes' daughters in succession he protested, but in vain, the last couple eloping to be married last Saturday. Mr. Starnes seeing himself thus outwitted, went to the house of Mrs. Hamby, the mother, and almost by force put her in his buggy, and, riding off to Fayetteville, married her, thus completing the circle of a family union.

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Latest Fashion Phases.

There will be no excuse this season if everybody be not well-dressed, for articles have been provided to suit all purses; and fashions are so varied that the choice is great.

Many charming trifles have been brought from Paris, among them headdresses of the most airy description, which a breath would blow away, and for which the materials could be bought for a few cents; spiral bows made in the thinnest tulle, in form somewhat like a butterfly, the wings upstanding—they are to be had white and of the lightest peach or maize tints, and they are placed in front of the high erection of hair; French women affect them, and they add much to the finish of a headdress, but they require to be well put on.

There are a number of inexpensive materials which would meet the wants of young ladies. For dresses which could be worn on most ordinary occasions, there are some silks with a beige ground which display velvet stripes, in one or two colorings, and of different widths, as, for example, brown with red in the centre, and electric stripes an inch apart. These are made up into plain skirts; cashmere cloth and woollen stuffs being draped over them.

Several of the serge grounded silks with brocades upon them are not expensive, and yet have a good appearance, drape well, and look good value for the money expended.

Some of these silk serges are checked—just a cross-bar of contrasting color; others have a silk brocaded stripe, others a brocade like a horseshoe, or some other device of the kind at sparse intervals. Some have little oval spots in two colorings on a shot ground, and these can be made up into pretty dresses.

But the novelty of the year which young people will appreciate is the Sunshine silk (a thin soft make of Oriental silk), but printed in attractive patterns, so that it not only looks thicker, but certainly smarter than when plain. Some of the stripes are merely formed of spots alternating with rings, while others have good solid Japanese patterned stripes with conventional designs. Tussores with broad solid stripes alternating with floral brocaded stripes are admirable novelties.

What shall we have next? Could anything be more useless than a crepe lisse pocket handkerchief? Yet manufacturers are trying to bring them in, not only for trimmings in millinery, but for dress handkerchiefs.

Holding them in the hand must be detrimental, and any thought of using them simply ridiculous. But they are to be had in all the delicate shades now fashionable, the faintest green, pink, yellow, blue and cream.

Jerseys are so useful that it is not wonderful that they still remain fashionable, but the new ones show a complete alteration in form. They are veritable jerseys no longer, but well-shaped bodices, which adapt themselves to any figure, and they are made of elastic cloth, so that the fabric, as well as the shape is altered. It is the glove fabric that is now employed, not the stockingette, the former being finer in weaving, and more silky.

These useful bodices are now made with beaded yokes, and also covered all over with hand-embroidered sprays; some are trimmed in military fashion with braid, others are striped, some are made full back and front; some have basques, and some are made like Norfolk jackets.

The coloring of many of them is exceedingly pretty; delicate heliotrope, slate, black and white, sky-blue, and other tones are used. For boating they are made often in cotton. The Jubilee jersey has a narrow collar and yoke cut on the cross, so that the stripes form a mitred corner down the centre of the back.

In stockings Lisle thread ones are now produced in all colors; and the newest variety in the fancy stocking is that the leg and the front of the foot are of different colors, an insertion of color being so woven that it covers the sides of the feet.

The new Anglo-Indian vests and combination garments will be found useful for the summer. They are of Swiss make, plain and ribbed, of silk and wool combined.

There are two distinctive novelties in parasol handles—one, Japanese bone, flat like a tusk, carved and engraved in black designs, broader and more important looking than handles of parasols usually are; the other, called "Bois bouillon," is very light and dull exteriorly, and unvarnished, but harmonizes well with the fashionable colors. En-tout-cas of the ordinary 20-inch size are in demand, with the flat Japanese handles.

There are a number of new ideas in parasols. Crepe lisse is a favorite material, embroidered or fulled on to the shape. Biscuit is one of the tones most used, and the old "mat" white. The pulled lisse parasols in this have an edging of thick silk cord, and no lace beyond. The pullings are applied inside as well as out. China silk is treated in the same way as lisse, and large bows, as well as balls, are added to the tops and handles. Muslin parasols are being made by thousands in the twelve pointed star shape, some of them arranged with one star laid over the other, one portion transparent. Crepe lisse treated in this way and bordered with lace has a soft and feathery effect. The star shape lends itself to the use of plenty of lace; so does the pagoda, which is being largely used again. Designers of parasols appear to have exercised all their ingenuity to produce something quite new. Perfectly flat shapes, with twelve ribs and a bordering of lace, are more novel than absolutely pretty; and the same may be said of the double-squares. Some special embroidered muslin has been prepared for the new parasols, with designs of rounds and squares; and white is likely to be more worn than cream tints.

Young girls' evening dresses are frequently made of soft silk in white and all colors, and this material lasts longer and looks better than tulle after once or twice wearing. Moreover, while quite suitable for a dance, silk can be worn at any kind of party. Girls wear low bodices, brought up a little on the shoulder, for all occasions of evening wear now. These soft silks are to be had in several delicate colorings, and are mostly trimmed with lace.

Linen colors and cuffs are once more the fashion; the newest are attached to tiny fronts of the same linen as the collar, and these as often as not are colored and fastened at the back. The cuffs to match are quite straight.

Dainty aprons for wearing at fancy bazaars are made of ecru embroidered muslin, with a large ruche of muslin and lace on one side of the bib. Small and pretty fichus and Steinkirk ties are made of lisse, tastefully intermixed with lace and ribbon.

In one of the specialities of the season is the military costume, which is stylish and becoming. The braiding of the jacket is copied from a uniform of the early part of the present century.

It has double lines of braid crossing the front, between rows of good-sized "cap" buttons, ending on each shoulder with a crow's foot and scroll. The braiding is in a contrasting color with the cloth of the costume, such as black on red, blue, dark green, etc., or gold or silver tinsel braid on gray, white, etc. The skirt is gracefully draped, and has a panel on the left side, which is braided to correspond with the bodice. White braiding on a pretty shade of blue-gray is cool looking and very effective.

In the soft, silken faced cloth there are several pretty costumes, trimmed with the new fancy stripe and checked materials, notably one in a becoming shade of dark green, trimmed with tartan. The skirt has long drapery both front and back; while on the right side is a panel of tartan, another of the cloth apparently buttoned on to it with large covered buttons, and then a few loose folds of tartan carried into the back drapery. The bodice is as perfectly fitting as tailors' skill can make it, with one revers of tartan in front, and cuffs and collars to match. On the flat tails at the back are three small inserted puffs of the tartan.

Another new material is in shades of gray-blue, fawn or gray, with two-inch stripes of broad and light tones, blended into each other in a novel way. This is to be made up with a plain material. Large checks and broad stripes are to be much worn, in conjunction with plain colors.

Thin cashmeres and cheviots, e light tweeds and delicate fancy fabrics are in great variety, for gowns and jackets. With some of the former there are full vests of white nun's cloth, kept in place by a band passed through vents in front, which are made to fasten into the fronts of plain bodices.

Odds and Ends.

FANCY PASTRY, AND HOW TO MAKE IT.

It is not always that one wants a pie or a tart. It is often a convenience to have on hand small articles of pastry suitable for serving at luncheon or breakfast, or supplying an elegant little addition to the tea-table. I suppose that everyone knows as much as I do about ordinary jam tartlets and patties, therefore, I will say nothing of them, but try rather to give suggestions for something different.

Open Fruit Tarts may be made as follows: Roll out a piece of pastry a quarter of an inch thick, and stamp it into a round shape with a saucer or a saucepan lid, whatever size may be wished. Make a border by moistening the edge of the round, and sticking upon it a roll of pastry, which roll may be pinched with the fingers to make it thinner at the top than it is at the bottom, the paste outside being afterwards pressed. Prick one or two holes in the round to make it keep flat, then bake it. When cold, fill the centre with any kind of fruit which has been boiled till soft, without being broken in a syrup of sugar and water, and pour over all the cold syrup which has been boiled longer than the fruit to make it thick. The pieces of fruit should be arranged neatly in a single layer and not piled one upon the other. Apples cut into quarters, small fruit and plums cut into halves, with the stones turned out, are very good served in this way. If liked, an open tart of this sort may be made of firm pastry by rolling the paste to a flat round and turning up the edge, or rolling the edge by turning the paste over, then baking it, and filling it when cold with sections of bright-colored red jam and yellow marmalade or apricot jam. A superior tart also may be prepared by spreading jam upon the round of pastry, then piling whipped cream on the top, and scoring a pattern on the cream, or sprinkling chopped pistachios and chopped cherries upon it.

Cream Tartlets.—Mix a teaspoonful of flour and a quarter of a pint of cream (or of cream and milk, or of milk alone) till quite smooth. Turn the mixture into a small saucepan, and stir it over the fire without stopping till it is thick and the flour is quite cooked. Turn it into a basin and put with it a piece of butter about the size of a walnut, some sugar to sweeten it agreeably, a little grated lemon rind, the beaten yolk of one egg or more, and two macaroons, or six ratafias, which have been crushed to powder with a rolling-pin. Put the basin containing the mixture into a saucepan of boiling water over the fire and stir it again, keeping the water boiling around it till the egg is cooked. Line some small tartlet tins with the rolled-out trimmings of pastry, fill with the preparation, and bake in a good oven. If liked, these tartlets may be still further enriched by placing lightly on the top of each, before putting the tartlets in the oven, a little knob of icing, which has been made by mixing the white of one egg with a tablespoonful of icing sugar.

Pastry Fingers.—Roll the pastry out thinly, and cut it into fingers about an inch wide, and three inches long. Spread a little jam or marmalade on one-half of these, and press the remaining half on the top to make a sort of jam sandwich. Bake these lightly in a well-heated oven. A minute or two before they are done brush them over with the white of egg, and sprinkle on the top crushed loaf-sugar, and either almonds or pistachios which have been blanched and roughly chopped. Put them back into the oven until the glazing is set, and take out and pile them crosswise on a dish.

Fruit Custard Tartlets.—Line some small tartlet tins with pastry which has been rolled out very thin. Dissolve a tablespoonful of red or black currant, or any other fruit jelly, and mix with it three spoonfuls of beaten egg. Fill the pans with the custard, and bake in a quick oven till the pastry is done.

Lemon Cheesecakes are perhaps too well-known to need description, but they are so good that I give the recipe: Put the strained juice and grated rind of one large fresh lemon into a saucepan, with the yolk of an egg, two tablespoonfuls of sugar and a slice of butter the size of an egg. Stir the mixture without ceasing until the ingredients are thoroughly blended, and it begins to thicken. These quantities make a small portion only, but they can be relatively increased if liked. A large open cheesecake, made with this mixture, may have one or two very thin slices of candied citron laid on the top.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

BUST OF BANK-NOTES.—Old and mutilated bank-notes, when they come back to the United States Treasury, are chopped up and made into a pulp, and this is moulded into various shapes and forms. The latest design is a miniature bust of Mrs. Cleveland. It takes ten thousand dollars' worth of bank-notes to make a bust of the President's wife, and each figure is labelled—"Made from mutilated United States bank-notes worth ten thousand dollars." These are sold for a small sum, and are having a good sale.

A YOUNG lady when presented with a pair of opera-glasses, asked—"How in the world am I to keep them on?"

Confidential Correspondents.

J. Z. P.—A letter addressed to Richmond Va., would no doubt reach him.

W. E. W.—We do not know the book you mean. What Doctor do you mean and what is his book about?

BERT.—We cannot undertake to decide as to which is the best of the various systems of short-hand writing.

SELF-TAUGHT.—There are frame makers in nearly every large town. You could obtain what you require from one of them. At the same time you could ask the question as to cleaning.

WIDOW.—Do not heed any venomous tittle-tattle about your daughter's suitor. Keep your eye on him, and never mind gossip, but judge for yourself. The scandal-mongers are probably jealous.

ETTIE.—Euclid was a mathematician of Alexandria, who lived B.C. 280. He is the author of the book on the elements of geometry bearing his name, and was the first to give the science a systematic form.

GWENNIE.—The phrase, Apres moi le deluge, is a French proverb, signifying "After me will come the deluge." It is used when the speaker wishes to intimate that they give themselves no trouble nor concern about what will occur after their decease.

W. H. C.—The culture of mushrooms forms an important feature in the commerce of France; and caves for their growth are to be found at Montrouge, Bayneux, Saint Germain, and Moulin de la Roche, all of which are under direct Government surveillance.

DOLLY.—The maxims or mottoes of the wise men of Greece are the following: "Most men are bad" (Bias), "Know thyself" (Solon), "Consider the end" (Chilo), "Know thy opportunity" (Pittacos), "Avoid extremes" (Cleobulos), and "Nothing is impossible to industry" (Periander).

R. S.—Although we would most willingly comply with your request about the poetry you speak of, it is impossible for us to do so, without knowing more clearly when it was published. "Three or four years ago" is very indefinite, and would, perhaps, require a day or more of research to find it. Try to locate the time better.

FORGET-ME-NOT.—It is difficult to hazard any safe conjecture as to the value of the talents spoken of in Scripture. The talent is the largest Hebrew weight for metals, and talents of gold, silver, lead, brass, and iron are all mentioned in the Bible. Each of these had its own weight in shekels. The gold talent is supposed to have been worth $30,000, and the silver talent $2000.

MAGNETIC.—Garibaldi was mainly instrumental in bringing about the unity of Italy. You can read his life in any biographical dictionary. Both men were enthusiasts; but, while Gordon was profoundly religious, almost to the point of fanaticism, Garibaldi was a decided and avowed free-thinker. Get at facts, and do not indulge too much in high-flown sentiment. An ounce of good spelling is worth a ton of gassy rhetoric.

BARBARA.—The names "Guelph" and "Ghibeline" originate in Italy: were thence connected in Germany with the Suabian Dynasty, and were used there first in the quarrel between Conrad the Third, founder of the Suabian line, and Henry Duke of Bavaria, who opposed his election. The friends of Henry were then called "Guelphs," after one of his ancestors, and those of Conrad "Ghibelines." The greatest Prince of the Suabian Dynasty was Frederick Barbarossa.

ANXIETY.—We greatly sympathize with you in your unpleasant position. A long letter to the young lady herself, setting forth all the circumstances as plainly and frankly as you have set them forth to us, would be the best means of reopening the question. Write quite respectfully and affectionately—such a letter as she could show to her parents. Your steadfastness and devotion should conquer in the end. Probably she loves you, and acts only under external dictation. If so, her parents will doubtless sooner or later consent to your marriage.

SUFFERER.—Chloroform does not leave any bad effects on the system—in fact, even where people feel ill after its administration for surgical purposes, no trace of its effect is seen after a few hours. Of course you are aware that there have been cases where patients have died under chloroform or immediately after its administration has ceased. Nitrite, not nitrate, of amyl is another. It is used to relieve neuralgia and for other purposes, and has been used as a resuscitant in syncope. It causes flushing and distension of the vessels of the head, and must be used with great caution.

ADRIANA A. P.—Your trouble seems to have distracted you, and you need rest and quietness. Do not heed the creatures who call you by contemptuous names; they are not worth notice. You have done your duty to your father; and, now that he is under ground, you have nothing to reproach yourself with. You have got into an excited way of talking; and you may become hysterical if you do not set a guard on yourself. In your very kind and touching letter there are several sentences left unfinished in an odd way; and that is not a good sign. It seems as though your thoughts were confused and wild. Try to be calm.

REFRACTION.—The books are quite right in representing the path of the ray of light as in your first diagram; and a little careful thought will show you that this is the case. If however you require a demonstration, there is a very easy one always available. Place a quarter in a cup of any opaque substance, then raise the cup until the edge thereof just covers the coin—that is, until it is just hidden by the cup's rim. Now pour in water—or, better, get some one else to do this—and you will see the coin rise up apparently, so that it is easily visible. This can occur only from the rays of light reflected by the coin, which pass above your eye, bending down so as to reach the eye. Now consider the case of the stick. It, as you quite correctly show in your sketch, appears bent upwards. This is exactly what occurs to the coin; it is lifted upwards, because the rays from it are abruptly bent downwards as they leave the water. Just as the right-hand side of a balance beam rises when the left is forced down, so the turning down of the light ray causes that from which it is reflected to seem to turn up. The light from the stick being bent down, our eye judges the light to come in a straight line to it, and so the stick seems bent up. Your error has arisen from your confusion of the path of the ray with the apparent direction of that path as presented to the brain by the eye.